

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

JUNE 26, 1937

WHO'S WHO

JOHN WILTBYE'S concern for Catholic children in Catholic schools is nothing new, but as a Southerner himself he welcomes a confirmation from the Church in the South for his well-known solicitude that the wise teachings of the Church in this matter of Christian education be put into effect. . . . DAVID GORDON finds the world full of Frank Merriwell, with his "carbolic smile," not to speak of H. G. Wells, Frank Merriwell in another avatar. Not enmity to dime or even to nickel novels, but aversion to sham inspires his irony. . . . JOSEPHINE MACDONALD writes for the home page of *Columbia*, and is the mother of a fine family. No friend of pernicious child labor, she is a friend of youth's right to work when such work will benefit the young in soul and body. She warns against those who would rob them of this right in the name of political theories. . . . GERARD DONNELLY'S travels through the realms of Catholic liturgy, as exemplified in the colorful Oriental rites, have developed into a personally conducted tour. Instead of abstractly analyzing, he takes us to one of the Eastern-rite churches in our large cities, and introduces us to priest or sexton. This time the scene is laid in Chicago, and the Mass is said in the language of our Saviour Himself, the ancient Aramaic of the Catholic Chaldaeans. . . . LEONARD FEENEY wields a kindly but pointed pen over the amply groomed and washed forms of the typical American family. He sees the U.S.A. as it parades itself abroad: tragic figures beneath a brave show.

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COMMENT

RECOGNIZING the work of the Marquette League and incidentally the outstanding merits of its President for many years, Gonzaga University of Spokane honored itself as well as the recipient in bestowing the annual De Smet medal this year on Judge Alfred J. Talley. The medal which was established in 1929 was brought from Spokane by the President of the University, Rev. Leo J. Robinson, S.J., Ph.D., was conferred by his Eminence Cardinal Hayes at the Cathedral residence, June 14, in the presence of a few intimate friends of the recipient. Immediately following the presentation a dinner was given to honor Judge Talley at the Catholic Club quarters in the Waldorf Astoria. The rooms were attractively decorated with Indian handicraft and Gonzaga colors. Two factors united to make the 1937 presentation of the De Smet medal more than ordinarily significant. It marks the Golden Jubilee of Gonzaga as well as the three-hundredth anniversary of James Marquette's birth. It was revealed by Rev. Bernard A. Cullen, present Director of the Marquette League, that more than a million dollars has been contributed by this organization since its start to the Indian missions. On account of Father De Smet's pioneer work for the Indians of the Northwest, Gonzaga University, that grew out of the Indian missionary labors, chose well and wisely in honoring an outstanding New Yorker, who has labored so zealously and so long for the Marquette League.

ONE of the little devices resorted to in the present Nazi hate-campaign against the Catholic clergy is to publish fictitious "confessions" of collusion between Rome and Moscow. All this Nazi glorying in anti-Bolshevist zeal may obscure the fact that Hitler himself has found it far from inexpedient to cultivate friendly relations with Communism when he considered it to his own interest to do so. Immediately after his access to power in 1933 he expressed his desire for "amicable relations" with the U.S.S.R. It was not Brüning, nor Von Papen, nor Schleicher who renewed the 1925 treaty of Rapallo with Russia, which expired in 1931, but the Third Reich two years later. On January 20, 1934, Hitler spoke to the Reichstag on "the common interests of the two countries." March 27, 1934, Germany and Russia concluded a financial and economic agreement, which was renewed in April, 1935. In Hitler's own words, expressed to the correspondent of the London *Daily Express* in his interview after taking power, "Germany is interested in Communism merely as a problem for its own internal regime." In its issue of October 20, 1936, the Holland Catholic paper, the *Maasbode*, reminded their German critics that, after all, Holland was one of the very few countries which have not given Soviet

Russia *de jure* recognition nor accorded the U.S.S.R. diplomatic relations, as has the Government of the Third Reich.

IN a recent article on Spain H. N. Brailsford with characteristic assurance asserts that the Spanish Republic was challenged by feudalism based, in addition to the landed estates and the army, on the "fabulously wealthy political Church." So far as the wealth angle is concerned, the ghost of clerical riches in Spain should be permanently laid, if it ever can be laid, by Father Thomas Feeney's *The Church in Spain, Rich or Poor*, a pamphlet currently published by the AMERICA PRESS. The record shows that in a typical year, 1913, the fifty priests in the top salary bracket received \$500 per year, \$100 less than government clerks. 3,495 priests had to be content with between \$100 and \$120 per annum, while many had to live on even less. The Archbishop of Toledo, the highest salaried prelate of all Spain, received \$8,000 per annum for all his needs of personal sustenance, administration and charity. The Bishops of Madrid and Barcelona received \$5,400. The civil governors of Madrid and Barcelona started with an initial \$4,000 per year, to which were added the somewhat surprising perquisites of \$2,000 for personal expenses, \$8,000 for assistants, and between \$1,000 and \$2,400 for equipment. The President of the Republic enjoyed the same salary as the Archbishop of Toledo, \$8,000; but his life was considerably eased by an additional \$56,000 for personal expenses. As for the mythical Jesuit gold and haciendas, when Manuel Azaña confiscated the Jesuit properties, he discovered that he had taken hold of a net indebtedness of \$2,000,000.

IT'S a long journey when you travel eighty-one years in search of spiritual happiness, but if you find it at the end, what matters how long the quest? At any rate, Mrs. Mary E. Criswell, of Oklahoma City, came recently to that conclusion, when she was recently received into the Catholic Church by the Rev. James A. Garvey of that city. Mrs. Criswell, according to the *Southwest Courier*, was born in Charlton, Mo., in 1856, and her father's mother was Stonewall Jackson's sister: one might say a natural heritage of religion. The circumstance that brought Mrs. Criswell into the Church was a simple one, but it deserves much thought. Since her stay in Oklahoma City, she says, her Catholic neighbors have been the nicest to her, and it was through them she came in touch with Catholic teaching and practice. In the Southland this remark would not draw much attention, since neighbors in that part of the world have a way of being "nice" with one another, and Southern Catholics, for the most part,

preserve a tradition of friendliness with their non-Catholic fellow-citizens. But in bleaker and more populous regions this duty—or privilege—is all too frequently overlooked. Clannish Catholics are repelled by clannish Protestants, and they move in separate worlds. If the Church is to grow in this country, it is not by “saving the saved,” but by human friendliness in our relations with the neighbor, whatever be his unlikeness in ways, appearance or belief.

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THERE still seems to be some hope for California, even though many wise heads in the State were beginning to believe that her case was hopeless. The influence of the surging crowd that has gone to bask in the Southern California sunshine and more particularly under the cosmic rays of Hollywood's kleig lights is viewed by “native sons and daughters” as deleterious, to say the least, to the State's best interests. Nearly every brainless fad, whether in education, sociology or politics, has been foisted on the State primarily through the efforts of her southern delegates to the Legislature. Hope was revived quite lately when Governor Frank F. Merriam vetoed an Assembly bill, which would have added “incompatibility” to the already numerous grounds for divorce in the State. It is easy to imagine how widely the divorce gates would have been opened by the proposed new statute, when the bill defined incompatibility as “the inability of either or both parties to the marriage to live together without mental anguish or humiliation, or physical suffering.” Perhaps some enterprising legal minds in the State hoped that the passage of the bill would attract to the shores of the Pacific some of the lucrative grist that goes to the Reno divorce mill. The reasons adduced by the California Governor in refusing to sign the bill, namely, “that divorce is too easily obtainable even under present statutes, and that the proposed addition is entirely undesirable,” commend themselves to thoughtful legislators everywhere throughout the country.

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THE New Constitution of Ireland passed its third and final reading of the Dail and a general election which will be at once a plebiscite on the acceptance of the Constitution by the people and the election of a new Dail has been called for July 1. This election introduces some changes into the representation and constituencies as they have been since the establishment of the Free State. The new Dail will be reduced from 153 to 138 seats. Though the number of members has been reduced the number of constituencies has been increased. The change in the constituencies has been made to follow the shift of population and to insure a more equal representation than heretofore. Two issues primarily confront the electors, the adoption or rejection of the Constitution and a new mandate of approval or defeat for Fianna Fail and de Valera. As far as one may pronounce from the coming elections, a victory for de Valera embracing both issues seems on the boards.

AFTER Marshal Tukhachevsky and the seven generals paid the supreme price, twenty-eight others, charged with sabotage and spying in the railroads, followed them before the firing squad, bringing the total of Soviet executions for the month up to one hundred and two. What these men thought of Russian justice as they faced death we shall never know; but it will be interesting to gather the reaction of the Left and Liberal Press to this latest display of Soviet criminal procedure. The ink was hardly dried on Stalin's new Democratic constitution when Liberal enthusiasm suffered a severe jolt in the Kamenev-Zinoviev batch of trials. Papers that had long taken a strong and righteous line against the dictators in Italy and Germany now began gropingly and tentatively to cast Stalin in the heavy villain roles alongside of Hitler and Mussolini. The Radek confessions brought further heartaches and soul-searching to the admirers of the Soviet Republic. The *New Republic* for June 16 confesses its distress over the paralyzing fears and suspicions now gripping Soviet art and industry. The Liberals are now in a fresh dilemma when they see the adored leaders of the Red Army, that great bulwark of proletarian freedom, either the victims of irresponsible tyranny, or else guilty of such grotesque and irrational treachery, as would make the bourgeois nations all over the world reel with astonishment.

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CHICAGO was gracious host to two most important Catholic gatherings during the week just gone. Down at the Stevens' Hotel, thousands of Catholic humanitarians of the body assembled under the leadership of the Catholic Hospital Association. That was a mature Convention with a record of high achievement in the past and an ideal of progressive advancement. But out at the Loyola Community Theatre a dramatic infant was born. Under the generous hosting of Father Dinneen and Charles Costello, under the poised chairmanship of Emmet Lavery, with the unanimous cooperation of diocesan priests, Dominicans, Jesuits and other Religious men, of Sisters wearing diverse garbs, of lay gentlemen and ladies, was brought into being the Catholic Theatre Conference. Since the priests were mostly anti-clerical and the laymen were anti-laical, peace and mutual sympathy were the undercurrent. Catholicism was the uppercurrent. The Editor went to Chicago with a doubt as to how Catholic the Theatre Conference would be. He was amazed. In all the Conventions he has ever attended, he never found an equal manifestation of dynamic Catholicism. He never heard such sane and firm demands that Catholicism should find a natural outlet through the playwright and the play producer. The principles of art in the drama, the necessity of entertainment on the stage were evaluated and were guaranteed. But the purpose was chief in all considerations. The Catholic Theatre Conference having been born will be baptized at the Convention to be held on August 7 in conjunction with the Blackfriar Institute, the Catholic University of America, Washington.

THE NEGLIGENT PARENT AND THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE

Better parents will give us better schools

JOHN WILTBYE

NODDING in my arbor over a copy of the *New York Times* I ponder over the better times that were when I was a boy. My reflections were prompted by a letter addressed to that journal (June 13, 1937) in which Louis A. Stone finds cause for encouragement in the fact that modern fathers and mothers take a real interest in the education of their children. They understand, he contends, that three factors in education are essential, the school, the pupil and the home, welded into one force.

Conditions were not so happy, writes Mr. Stone, when he went to school. Nor were they better when he taught school twenty-five years ago. The only time he saw a parent was when the father or mother of an incorrigible boy was summoned into conference. It may be so, but I wonder how many who first stepped out on the long, the unending, road to learning more than half a century ago will agree? How many who went to school in the later '70's (not to get back to the geologic ages) and the early '80's recall a system in which the school and home were unrelated? Rather, it seems to me, we remember that if we were subjected to the rod in school we knew that another rod was in pickle at home, to be applied with double vigor as soon as the news of the magisterial castigation reached the domestic precincts.

If we push back farther into American history, the union of school and home becomes, it seems to me, even more intimate. Lincoln's mother could barely read and we do not know that she could write; his step-mother, Sarah Bush Johnston, was most uncertain in her spelling; yet both these women did everything they could to encourage young Abraham to learn his book. Do I go too far in thinking that these women were not exceptional in this respect, but only two that fame has singled out from a generality of men and women who toiled as they toiled that their children might sit under a torch of learning that had never been kindled for them?

Rated by current standards, many of our pioneer forefathers were barely literate. But the academies that dotted New England by the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the schools and colleges which a few generations later sprang up everywhere on the virgin soil of the Middle West,

are proof beyond cavil of the love of learning that burned in the hearts of these strong, self-reliant, foreseeing men and women. Nor did they sacrifice themselves to build these schools that their children might find in them a place to acquire habits of idleness.

But the point I labor is, perhaps, not important. Mr. Stone is wholly right in declaring that "the home is either the greatest obstacle or of the greatest assistance to the school," although he weakens his original contention, I think, when he doubts whether what we need today is better schools or better parents. The greater need, I should think, is for better parents, first, because these will take an intelligent interest in the intellectual development of their children, and next, because out of this interest will spring a demand for the utter destruction of those disintegrating methods in the modern elementary and secondary school which make intellectual development impossible.

It may interest Mr. Stone to know that the position he takes on the relation of parents with the school has been set forth in the Code of Canon Law and ably defended by Pius XI in his Encyclical *On the Christian Education of Youth*. In the Catholic economy the parent comes first. Upon him rests primarily the duty to care for the physical, intellectual and spiritual welfare of the child, for the child is his and, as it were, an extension of his personality. Just as no State may deprive him of his rights over his child, so he may never divest himself of his sacred duties as a parent. Teachers and schools simply act as his agents, and he communicates to them for the time some portion of his God-given authority.

It follows, then, that the responsibility of the Catholic parent, indeed of every parent, in the education of his child is exceedingly grave. He must first select the school with care, giving every factor its true value. Since the spiritual welfare of the child is of paramount importance, the Catholic parent may not entrust his child to any school in which this welfare is imperilled. He must choose a school in which it will be carefully promoted; hence, according to the Canon Law, reinforced by the teaching of Pius XI in the Encyclical cited, he may not, without permission of the Bishop, entrust his

child to any school of whatever grade that is not a Catholic school. In the next place, he is obliged to watch over, according to his ability, the progress of the child, and to permit nothing which might impede it in the home or its arrangements.

Briefly, he must realize that the home is either the greatest obstacle or of the greatest assistance to the school. Mr. Stone has phrased that important fact admirably. Were all parents model parents, our schools would make rapid progress and all might become model schools! What is better, we should soon be able to look forward to stalwart generations of men and women whose hands would fashion a happier world than mankind now knows.

A BISHOP INSTRUCTS HIS FLOCK

AN elderly gentleman of my acquaintance is bitterly opposed to labor unions. He thinks that the average wage-earner is paid far in excess of his deserts, and he argues that any association which might bring the worker an increase in his emoluments is to be discountenanced. On a recent occasion he was reminded that the Holy Father did not seem to agree with him; that, in fact, he was out of step not only with Pius XI but also with his predecessors in the See of Peter, Benedict XV, Pius X and Leo XIII. He was not at a loss for an answer. "What the Popes say may be all right for Europe," he retorted, "but they never intended that doctrine for the United States!"

I do not believe that this worthy gentleman's attitude is shared by many Catholics. Of course, we have our moss-backed Tories, and among Catholic employers a few slave-drivers, but as a body Catholics have welcomed the Labor Encyclicals and pronouncements of the Popes from Leo XIII down to our own day. But I greatly fear that too many among us believe that the law of the Church on education, as promulgated officially in the Code, and reinforced and explained in many Papal pronouncements from the time of Pius IX to our own day may be disregarded with impunity in the United States.

Time and again has that fact been brought before me. I am quite sure that Mr. Wiltbye's article will evoke protests that the Church never intended her decrees on education to be enforced in this country. Catholics who do not question the Church's authority in requiring them under pain of grave sin to assist at the Holy Sacrifice on Sunday, appear to believe that she goes outside her legitimate sphere of authority when she declares that the obligation of every Catholic parent to entrust his child to a Catholic school is likewise grave. Why they accept the Church's authority in one case, and reject it in another is a question which one day they must answer in the presence of Almighty God. Certainly the Church would be false to the mission given her by her Founder were she to fail to point out the dangers inherent in educational systems which eliminate Almighty God and His authority over every

human soul, or if, enacting her law, she were indifferent as to its observance.

As I write, the *Catholic Week*, published at Birmingham, Alabama, is placed before me, and it furnishes a most appropriate example of what the Church's law on education means, even in the United States. Under the double-column heading, "Bishop Orders Every Catholic Child in a Catholic School," the *Week* carries a letter from the Most Rev. T. J. Toolen, D.D., Bishop of Mobile, to his priests and people. The headline is not misleading. Firmly, but in language which shows his fatherly solicitude, the Bishop writes that the Catholic children of the diocese must be sent to Catholic schools.

The Bishop is not unmindful that in certain parts of his diocese unusual difficulties may attend the observance of this law. Hence, under conditions of difficulty, not presumed but actually ascertained, the attendance of children at non-Catholic schools may be "tolerated." This word, taken from the Canon Law, is of prime importance. Such attendance is never approved, and before it can be tolerated, permission of the Bishop or of some official designated by him, must be obtained. The priests, writes the Bishop, have no power to deal with these cases. As they may arise, they "must be put in writing and presented to the Bishop or the Vicar General." Parents who without permission enroll their children in non-Catholic schools where there is danger to their Faith "are not to be absolved," and the Bishop adds, "are not to be given Holy Communion if they come to the altar rail." These penalties may seem severe, but only to those who do not realize the gravity of the transgression for which they are imposed.

But the case is not ended when permission to attend a non-Catholic school has been legitimately obtained. It should be noted, further, that this permission is never given when it is clear that in a particular school the Faith or morals of the pupil would be endangered. The Bishop writes that the pastors must arrange classes in religion for Catholic children in the non-Catholic elementary and high schools, and all must attend. These classes are of such importance that, writes the Bishop, "if the children in public or non-sectarian high schools do not attend these instruction classes, parents and children are to be denied the Sacraments." The Bishop here acts under the authority of Canon 1374; "It is for the Bishop alone to decide, according to the instructions of Apostolic See, in what circumstances and with what precautions, attendance at such schools may be tolerated without danger of perversion to the pupils."

The fight today is for the soul of youth and we must bear our share of the strife. We had better know now who are with us and who are against us, who are willing to abide by the laws of the Church, and who are not. We cannot be neutral when it is a question of God, a question of our eternal salvation.

On this high plane the Bishop ends his letter. The principles he has set forth are of universal application. The laws which he cites bind Catholics everywhere. They must be conscientiously obeyed in the United States as well as in Sicily and Sweden, Alaska and the Argentine. PAUL L. BLAKELY, S.J.

THE LAST STAND OF FRANK MERRIWELL

In the manner of a theological dime novel

DAVID GORDON

DURING the administration of William Howard Taft there was a little boy in a little town in Ohio who loved to sneak away to the woods and read. According to biographic precedent, it should here follow that it was the Bible or Shakespeare which were the unvarying staples of my boyhood perusal. Well, it wasn't the Bible and it wasn't Shakespeare; and it wasn't even Robinson Crusoe. (Stevenson pretended to a boyhood delight in this latter classic, but I found Robinson a verbose bore at the age of twelve and I find him so today.)

It was Frank Merriwell who was the literary hero of my generation: Frank and his brother Dick. Frank and Dick were sired by the Street and Smith Corp. and were a nickel apiece. The Merriwell series were for the literary elite of my boyhood days; the helots gorged themselves with Young Wild West and Old King Brady. I and my pal Ray thought ourselves above such *chandala*. We were both too skinny to be of much account at football, so we maintained a snooty superiority to the more upstanding and athletic boys by wearing celluloid collars to school and consuming this more effete literature.

Frank Merriwell stood in the same relationship to Young Wild West as today James Joyce does to Rex Beach. Merriwell defended his honor with the Anglican weapon of the fist in contrast to Young Wild West's election of the plebeian horse pistol. The field of Merriwell's victories was the baseball diamond at Yale, whereas Wild West macerated his villains on the untrimmed plains of Dakota. It was a clean-limbed, athletic personality that Merriwell purveyed to our adoring boyhood; a sort of collegiate *mens sana in corpore sano*; a perfectly pagan and secular ideal, stemming (though I didn't know it then) from Charles Kingsley's muscular Christianity and Thomas Arnold's Rugby.

I have since learned that, in truth, the Merriwell series was the best seller in Street and Smith's juvenile line. Ray and I weren't exclusive in our literary tastes after all. *Mundus vult decipi* translates very well into "there's a sucker born every minute." We love to be assured by the publisher's jacket that the book we are reading is very exclusive indeed only to discover one day to our mortifi-

cation that the next door lady is reading *Gone with the Wind* too. And my Uncle Jake gave up buying *Reader's Digest* when he saw the driver of a sausage wagon deep in the brain-building capsules of this periodical.

There is a state of soul which can be called Merriwellism and which has been the affliction of mankind since the world began. Merriwellism is a Utopia conceived on athletic terms. Its ideal is the body beautiful supporting a mind stuffed full of book-of-the-month culture. Every generation is a Merriwell generation which terms itself "scientific," "forward looking" and "emancipated" and would rebuild a brave new clean world by simply amending the political and economic machinery. Frank Merriwell possessed no spark of soul life whatever and in all his years at Yale (from 1891 to 1913, according to the records of the Street and Smith Corp.) he displayed no consciousness of the fact that the direction of events is in the hands of God.

H. G. Wells with his predictions of enameled, forcibly educated warless worlds is the leading Merriwellian writer. The reform rabbis who give book reviews to congregations dressed in riding habits on Saturday mornings in the synagogues along Central Park West are Merriwellian clerics. It is said of one of these that he inadvertently mentioned God in his book review one Saturday morning and the congregation thought he was using profanity. Every new Communist dramatist who jumps into fame on Broadway and finishes in Hollywood—every one of these Semito-Saxon agitators for a classless society blooming with free thought, free trade and free abortion—is a Merriwellian.

This is getting to be an old planet. And yet it is surprising how the same outbursts of physical meliorism recur during each century, gain control and then disintegrate. They disintegrate because they are unsubstantial. And they are unsubstantial because they have no spiritual underpinning.

So it is with Communism and the "planned economy" of the Marxists. It isn't new at all. 1793 in Paris was a Commune. 1871 in Paris was a Commune. 1937 in Barcelona is a Commune. So were the republics of ancient Rome: the class-conscious proletarians of the day poured into the Capitoline precincts and demanded bread and circuses. And

it always ends the same way. When the Goths had razed the well-washed, planned, literary state which the Caesars had created in obedience to the demands of the mob and the planned economy of the stoic philosophers, then came the Benedictine monks into the waste lands of Europe, establishing agriculture and handicraft and a happy civilization founded on the worship of Christ and His Wounds.

But Merriwell doesn't admire any kind of wounds. Neither do the collegiate economists. They know better. They call our Saints morbid and hold up for our emulation Frank Merriwell (with the addition of "art" and Marxism and libertarianism).

Alas, the Saints of the Church aren't Merriwellians at all. Saint Alphonsus of Liguori was blind and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux was consumptive. And we who are proud rankers in their army know that only by the holy afterglow which their lives have left behind on earth is mankind saved from destruction. *Nil nisi Deus stabile est* said Saint

Augustine (who suffered from halitosis) and yet every year the post-graduates begin advocating anew the preservation of civilization by means of art and Marx.

That dear and luscious writer, Hazlitt, in his essay on Cobbett, gives us old disillusioned Merriwellians a compliment:

They know the balance of the human intellect. They do not fall in love with every meretricious extravagance at first sight, or mistake an old battered hypothesis for a vestal.

I called this essay Frank Merriwell's Last Stand. The title has a purely mnemonic value. In truth, it is always Frank Merriwell's last stand while the world wags on. Merriwell rises again every century and poisons the air with his clean carbolic smile. Then he collapses from central instability. Along come Christian souls, moved by the Spirit, and sanctify the debris. But Merriwell ultimately rises again. So will it be until Christ comes to end the world and separates His own from the Merriwellians.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND WONDERS ABOUT CHILD LABOR

Amendment aimed at something more than labor

JOSEPHINE MacDONALD



THE Forgotten Man of today is the father of a young family who must, regardless of circumstances of health, finances, opportunity, or ability, provide eighteen years of support for each of his children if the so-called Child Labor Amendment becomes law: seventy-two years of support for four, one hundred and eight years for six children.

The Forgotten Woman is the widow who must leave, not only young children but her brawny sixteen and seventeen-year-old sons as well, at home to learn from street-corner gangs how to break her heart a few years hence, while she goes out to earn for their support less money than they could earn themselves if they were permitted.

The Forgotten Youth are those eager, ambitious, wholesomely active young people who, after completing high-school courses at sixteen must, if this legislation is passed, spend two years idling their eagerness into discouragement, their activity into apathy, idealistic years possibly into sordid ones.

The Forgotten Unit, in this discussion about the work control of all persons up to eighteen by Congress, is the family. Because a few sub-normal families force children to work too soon, the control of every youth would be taken from the family which, having produced, provided for and lived with him, probably knows better than any political appointee could possibly know, how long he should continue his education and when he would be most benefited by going to work.

And above all, the Forgotten Fact is that the "Labor" which some strangely warped minds seem to look upon as a loathsome thing from which children should be guarded as carefully as were Victorian children from the facts of life, is really something that normal young people in their half-past 'teens,—those bright-eyed, intelligent youngsters whom we like to consider as typical American boys and girls,—are eager for and need, as an outlet for normal energies, when they have gone as far in

educational pursuits as their interests or their families' pocketbooks will allow.

Let the theorists elucidate their pros and cons about this proposed amendment. Let its proponents picture for us piteous cases of thin-chested infants dragging their ways to dingy factories. Let its opponents echo their fears that everything from education to the cut of youthful hair is included in the amendment. I am left cold by both schools of orators. I know that the piteous cases of thin-chested infants sentenced to hard labor are few, growing fewer, and could have been eradicated several years ago if the framers of this present amendment had so sincerely desired only that end. Had they worded it so that it gave to Congress no power except to eradicate real child labor, forty-eight State legislatures would have passed it on its first presentation over a decade ago.

But that healthy, well-developed young people who happen to be of the active rather than the studious temperament, or whose parents cannot afford to give them higher education, should be forbidden their right to work when they want to, and should be forced to endure idleness during their most eager, ambitious years, disturbs me more grievously than any proposed legislation has ever before disturbed me.

When I say that most normal children want to work, I speak not as a sentimentalist who has read about the joys or horrors of labor while comfortably ensconced in a chair, nor as a theorist who has studied children out of books, nor as a credulous listener to platform lecturers or sincere but superficial club women. I speak as the mother of several fine children who sees that even now, young as they are, they are happiest when they are busiest. (They will all be through high school from one to two years before they are eighteen, after which they may or may not wish—or be able—to go directly to college.) I speak also as one who remembers that one of the most zestful periods of her own life was during the few years following her high-school graduation at fifteen, when she was busier than the second-hand of a clock, combining work with the acquiring of a higher education. The double dose of "labor" seemed to act more as an appetizer for life than anything else.

It is parents who themselves have lived actively and known the joy of it who resent most the possibility of their children's being forced into the harmful situation of having nothing to do. While those parents are too busy earning a living and putting patches on knicker knees to get into headlines often, they have more common sense about living, and know more about what is good for their children than any ten of the political appointees who would be put in charge of them if this amendment went through.

Parents recognize something which this amendment fails to recognize: that not all children are alike: that some are of the manual, some of the mental type: that some should be given higher education and some allowed to go to work. And there is another thing that parents know who have gained their maturity through living and not through sit-

ting-and-thinking. It is that all the sitting-and-thinking in the world will not produce so much as one loaf of bread or one pair of stockings. These parents have, therefore, somewhat less respect for the intellectual theorists who so superiorly consider themselves capable of advising young people not to work, than the intellectual theorists have for themselves.

To a youth of sixteen or seventeen, restraint from productive occupation is a very different matter. Enforced leisure at that age may easily turn some boys toward harmful, even vicious pursuits. In other boys, the sense of responsibility is sufficiently developed at that age to make enforced idleness in the face of his family's need mean spiritual torture to him. And in the 'teens, misery is not forgotten overnight as does happen so often in childhood.

If it were in a great social cause that intelligent parents were being called upon to hand over their youth to theorists, bureaucrats and self-seeking labor leaders who know neither economics nor justice, we would not complain. But the cause of eliminating real child labor could be otherwise accomplished. Beyond that, what is being accomplished is the withdrawal of a certain proportion of workers from industry in the fatuous belief that other workers will benefit by their withdrawal. The theory is that there is only a static amount of production to be done. But if labor leaders turned their energies entirely toward increasing distribution, through higher wages and other channels, this country's productions could increase for decades absorbing all available workers, before its potential markets would be supplied. When labor leaders have made up their minds to go straight toward the goal of increased distribution, without taking senseless detours around it, we shall quickly approach social and economic security.

One more point and I have done.

Is it more cruel that a seventeen-year-old husky young person should have to work than that a bent man of sixty-five should have to? Is it more tragic that sixteen- and seventeen-year-old people in good health should take a job than that their ill and incapacitated father of sixty should keep his? Is there more cause for tears in the thought of an energetic girl or boy working than of their mother, who would have to leave younger children uncared for at home? Of course not! Then, if the Labor agitators who are trying to force the Child Labor Amendment through are really so humane, why do they not try to legislate ill and elderly people and mothers out of industry?

Because, dear Alice in Wonderland, dear, credulous club women, sentimentalists, pseudo-economists and all sitters-and-thinkers who consider that work is woe—because the men and the women have the right to vote and cannot, therefore, be despoiled of their right to work. Only the "dear little children" are helpless enough politically to be despoiled.

And if their parents don't wake up and fight, the despoliation will be accomplished while they are still dreaming that their children are their own.

EAST OF SUEZ AND NORTH OF THE LOOP

Chicago Catholics offer Mass in the language of Christ

GERARD DONNELLY, S.J.

THE place was one of those old-fashioned parish halls. I saw that the moment we pushed through the doors. A beautiful hall, but typical. Rows of folding chairs. Shreds of faded bunting drooping from the steam pipes. A faint aroma of coffee left behind by the last group of Communion break-fasters.

But a small white altar stood against a side wall. And so with instinctive reverence we took off our hats.

"If we were in Persia," said Yacoub Yussouf Avraham, "we would now be taking off our shoes."

Well, of course we were not in Persia. Chicago is half way across the world from Teheran, and St. Michael's parish hall is about ten minutes' ride northwest of the loop.

Yacoub Yussouf Avraham once tended sheep in his native Urmia; now he tends bar in a place near Wrigley Field. I met him through my interest in the Catholic Eastern rites. I had heard that a good many Chaldean Catholics escaped the Turkish massacres twenty years ago by fleeing to America and that some 130 families settled in Chicago, where a priest of their own had organized them for worship. Here was a chance, I decided, to see the Mass celebrated according to the Chaldean rite. So I visited the priest and asked for a mentor. He had just the man for me, he said. Yacoub Yussouf was known to hundreds of thirsty Cub rooters only as a man in a white coat called Jake. But at home (with his wife, Khatoun, and his children, Yohann, Youeel, Kanneh, and Mariam) he was a scholar. He talked perfect English and knew the history of his rite. And so within a half hour we were at the school hall—and here was my guide talking about taking off his shoes.

"That at least was my grandfather's rule when entering a church," he continued. "Hats on, shoes off! Or rather sandals off. My grandfather removed his hat only during the Kurbanah—which is our name for the Mass."

Beckoning me to follow, Yacoub sidled through the ranks of chairs, stopped directly in front of the altar, turned, and made a sweeping gesture.

"None of the old Catholic churches at home look like this at all," he began. "In Persia we have no pews; we sit on the floor during Mass. We have

no organ, because our sacred chant is accompanied only by the crash of cymbals or maybe the jangling of little bells and triangles. And here at the altar railing we build a stone wall, thick, solid, and rising from the floor up to the ceiling. It is pierced by a narrow center door, but the door is covered with a curtain to prevent our seeing the altar."

He stopped and looked at me with a smile. "Some of the very old churches," he added, "still have a bake-oven in the sacristy."

He had expected to astonish me with that. But somewhere I had heard of the old custom of baking the altar breads at the beginning of each Mass—a preliminary ceremony, I suppose, comparable to our own *Asperges*. Yacoub confessed he had never seen it, though, and probably the custom lapsed long ago.

"And now," he remarked, stepping up to the altar table, "you will want to have a look at our Missal."

A red, leather-bound book lay there on a stand, and he flipped it open. The page was covered with a bold script that looked like the lettering on a Turkish coffee shop.

"The priest reads this book backwards," Yacoub explained. "He begins at the back, turns the pages from left to right, and finishes up in the front."

"About the language—" I started to ask.

"We Chaldeans are extremely proud of our liturgical language," he broke in. "It is Chaldeo-Aramaic, the tongue spoken by Christ. At the consecration our priest uses the identical words heard at the Last Supper." He turned a few pages and laid his finger on one of the sentences. "Here we are—*Hanau Paghr*. And here too—*Hanau Daim*. These are the Saviour's actual words for 'This is my Body . . . my Blood.'"

It was at this point that I asked my guide about the ceremonies of his Mass. Were they notably different from ours? I was rewarded with a long enthusiastic lecture. But I select a few features as the most interesting.

1. There are no genuflections during the Chaldean Mass, and the priest's chant—which is practically non-stop—is markedly Oriental, sounding exactly like the muezzin call in *The Garden of Allah*.

2. The Mass begins with a short *Gloria* and an

Our Father, the latter finishing with that Papist-baiting phrase, "For Thine is the Kingdom, etc."

3. Wine is put into the chalice before the Epistle, which itself has three Lessons and is chanted by a layman.

4. Take the Host (it is unleavened and flavored with salt) into your left hand, the chalice in your right; lift them both on high while crossing your wrists in an X before your face, and you have the priest's gesture when he offers the gifts.

5. The *Pax*, which comes next, is rather startling. The priest kisses his fingers, touches the outstretched hands of the altar boy, who immediately distributes the kiss throughout the congregation, by going through the congregation and placing his clasped hands within the palms of each worshiper. The process looks like the children's game called "Button-button."

6. The *Preface*, oddly enough, is inaudible but the Consecrations are chanted loudly, and there is no Elevation. That comes perhaps five minutes later—but only after the priest, imitating a patriarch at prayer, has thrice stretched his hands towards heaven, then crossed both arms over his breast (as a saint in ecstasy), and finally kissed the altar at both sides. Then, as he elevates the Host, he deliberately breathes upon It as a token of reverence.

7. In another remarkable ceremony the celebrant invites his people to Communion before he himself receives. Taking the Host in his left hand, and holding it over the chalice, he steps a full pace to the left and turns to face the people. As they gaze at the Eucharist, he bows and sings a long and beautiful chant. He does not hold the chalice during this ceremony, I should add; it remains upon the altar.

8. The last Blessing is imparted with the missal, raised in the sign of the Cross.

"But do the people understand the language of this Mass," I queried after Yacoub had finished his little lecture. "Is the liturgical language similar to the daily tongue of the Chaldean people?"

Yacoub snorted with annoyance at the question. "You make a common mistake," he said. "You fail to distinguish between nationality and rite."

I did not see what he meant.

"Do all Roman Catholics live in one country?" he went on. "Of course not. And neither do all Chaldean Catholics. The people of our rite dwell in six or seven nations—Persia, Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Palestine, a few in Russian Georgia, and some even in Egypt. Hence we speak various tongues—Persian, Turkish, Russian, Arabic. We are separate in citizenship but united in rite, and we worship in a common language—which is dead, like your Latin."

With that cleared up, I started a new tack. "Your Mass," I began; "I know it has no connection with the Greek Mass. But what about it? Where did it come from?"

"Let me try to explain in four separate steps," he answered. "Not long after Our Lord's death his disciples were in Antioch, the big city north of Jerusalem, preaching the Faith and celebrating the Eucharist. But the Eucharist meant only a conse-

cration and communion—the simple words and act of Christ at the Last Supper. In time the converts added a number of prayers and ceremonies, and later a whole ritual—all, of course, in the Aramaic tongue. So there we get what we call the Antiochene Mass."

"I presume that is the first step."

"Correct," said Yacoub. "And now for the second. Missioners went out from Antioch and pressed northwards in their search for souls. Their work succeeded. One hundred years after Christ there was a big populous diocese at Edessa, in Syria, and here the Mass was the Mass brought from Antioch. As time went on, missioners left Edessa and forged far east into Persia, where the Faith enjoyed an astonishing growth and swept the whole country. Here also the Antioch Mass was celebrated, and the Aramaic tongue was the liturgical language. The third step is something that happened in the year 431."

"I recognize the date," I cried. "The Council of Ephesus. The condemnation of Nestorius."

"It was a bad day for my early ancestors," observed Yacoub. "All these Catholics I've been talking about refused to heed the council, stuck by their error, and broke with the Pope. That is the origin of the huge Nestorian Church. It had millions of people throughout Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia. It had the priesthood, the Sacraments, the Mass. But it was no longer Catholic. It was heretical."

He paused to let all this sink in. And then in his next sentence leaped over eleven centuries.

"About 1550, one of the Nestorian bishops turned from his heresy and submitted to Rome. Many of his own people followed him and became Catholics, too. Today we Chaldeans trace our spiritual descent from that group of converts. We are as Catholic as you are. But we have a Liturgy that is neither Roman nor Byzantine."

"In other words you are Catholic Nestorians."

But Yacoub bridled at that. "Did you ever hear of a Catholic Methodist? Or a Catholic Presbyterian? Precisely because our fathers repudiated their heresy, they chose the new name. Chaldea was that vast, vague ancient region famous for the Garden of Eden, the Tower of Babel, the Three Kings who came to Bethlehem. The name fitted us well."

As we left the hall, Yacoub volunteered some last bits of information.

"If you still think of Nestorianism as something ancient and forgotten, you will be astonished to learn that there are hundreds of Nestorians living here in the United States. Recent immigrants from Persia or Mesopotamia, these people are well attended by their own priests. Their Mass, of course, is exactly like ours."

"We Chaldeans now number fewer than 75,000 souls," he told me. "And that includes the 400 families here in America—the tiny groups who live in a dozen cities from Boston to the coast. We have only two, maybe three, priests in the country, and the only other place you can find the Chaldean Mass is in New Britain, Conn."

WITH SCRIP AND STAFF

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE "CATHOLIC WORKER"

RATHER severe strictures are expressed from time to time concerning the *Catholic Worker*, monthly periodical in newspaper form published by the group of the same name in New York City. The subject of these strictures is usually the *Catholic Worker's* attitude on various burning questions of the day. Since my own opinion, for better or for worse, has been often asked upon this matter, I am stating frankly some of my own impressions.

The young people identified with the Catholic Worker movement in various cities of the country are engaged in a charitable work specialized as to certain of its methods. The claim is made that these methods, while traditionally Catholic, have been pushed with marked success by the Communists. The Catholic Workers propagate Catholic social doctrine among the proletarians through round-table discussions, distribution at Communist gatherings, etc. Opportunity is afforded to non-proletarians or better-privileged Catholics to practise individual works of mercy among the proletarian group, thus exemplifying the charitable side of the Church and Christian solidarity in response to the Communist dramatization of social welfare and class solidarity. By the farm-commune program, a Christian non-governmental solution of the unemployment problem is to be worked out. And there are various allied activities.

No one who ponders the Holy Father's recent appeals for more intensive evangelization of the masses of the people, or who sees the havoc wrought by their apostasy, can fail to see the value of such a plan as sponsored by the *Catholic Worker*. While the farm-commune idea is still in the experimental stage and is subject to all the uncertainties that dog such projects in this country, their popular propaganda and their works-of-mercy or hospitality programs are accomplished facts. The warmest commendations of their charity I have heard from priests and prelates who themselves were on the firing line with poverty and isolation. The bitterest attacks have been from the Communists themselves, whose intricate tactics they have so accurately gauged.

There is a genuine longing, from thoroughly spiritual motives, on the part of many better-placed Catholics to form a fraternal contact with their less privileged brethren, to enter more intimately into the joys and sorrows of the laboring groups than is possible in customary charitable work. There is also a wide-spread feeling that we fail to exemplify our Catholic practice of social justice and charity in such fashion as to impress those who have been deeply impressed with the vivid dramatizations of

the radicals. The Catholic Worker plan is, or aims to be, a direct response to both these very urgent demands. Until these demands have been met in other fashions much more adequately than is now the case, it is difficult to see how we can criticize the Catholic Workers for jumping into the breach.

Where the Catholic Workers lay themselves most open to criticism is in their teaching, rather than in their acting capacity. They have attempted to combine two things, an educational and a charitable institution. As long as the teaching *Catholic Worker* occupies itself with describing and stimulating the work of the Catholic Workers, and of urging others to do the same, it is on its own specialized ground. When it broadens its scope and goes into the task of declaring a complete plan of integral Catholicism dealing with such matters as international relations, the application of industrial ethics to nation-wide labor movements, etc., it enters a much wider field, where a stricter intellectual accounting is demanded, where persons who would be whole-heartedly with the C. W.'s in their active program may feel obliged, as I myself feel obliged, to disagree with them on certain points, such as their peace doctrine. Where they differ from the more current Catholic opinions, it is not on matters strictly of our Holy Faith, but on debatable topics; although these topics are vital, on certain of which our Bishops seem to have taken a definite stand. Even where matters are wholly open to debate, it is difficult to see how the Catholic Workers can consistently propound all their theories unless they are ready to defend them on a more strictly intellectual plane.

I do not think that the Catholic Workers can sail in smooth waters until they can manage to do two things. First, to dissociate to such extent their teaching from their charitable capacity that the one will not be hindered by the other. I do not think that those who are grappling in person with a difficult milieu—missionary, pastoral or otherwise—are always the best fitted to work out the best type of doctrine to be presented to that milieu. Not that I advocate ivory towers—but I think that the fine technique of theory is apt to be dulled and confused by the harsh demands of practice, save with a few unusual minds. Secondly, the position of the C.W.'s would be much more effective and secure, if there were some of the clergy to take full responsibility for their positions on controverted topics.

Much as they naturally value unity of thought and work, I should like to see it easier than it now appears to be, for others to debate their ideas without thereby seeming to censure either their works or their movement as such.

If such provisions can be made, the Catholic Worker idea ought to attain the real stature that Dorothy Day has wished for it, and that it deserves.

JOHN LAFARGE

NAZI PAGANISM

THE protest against the paganization of Germany issued some weeks ago to all Protestant pastors by the National Confessional Synod has not received the attention which its importance merits. In some respects, it is the strongest indictment of the shameful persecution of religion by the Nazi Government that has yet been issued. "It is impossible to avoid the conclusion," writes the Synod, "that the complete and systematic de-Christianizing of the next generation of the German nation is taking place."

It is extremely difficult for us who live in a country where religious liberty and free speech are still realities, to comprehend what is going on in Germany. For upright men and women in Germany, it is probably even more difficult. As Father Toomey wittily but truthfully showed in these pages last week, the German people have been subjected to a poison gas of official lying that is without parallel in history. The people know only what the Government permits them to know, and practically all that it allows the newspapers to print is false. The Catholic press has been all but suppressed, and the letters of the Holy Father and of the Bishops can be brought to public notice only by means of pamphlets and fly sheets issued and distributed by agents who know that if they are discovered the penalty will be immediate imprisonment and perhaps death.

We can find a parallel by supposing that the Methodist Episcopal Church in this country were subjected to persecution by an all-powerful Government in Washington. The newspapers are ordered to circulate the vilest charges against the Bishops and clergy, and forbidden to print a word in their defense. Methodist schools, colleges, hospitals, and homes for orphans and old people are either closed or put under another direction, and their administrators are imprisoned for immoral acts attributed either to them or to former employees long ago discharged. Meanwhile the Government officially favors a return to the old American gods, Tecumseh, Sitting Bull, and perhaps Tammany.

Here we have a faint picture of what is going on in Germany. The National Confessional Synod reports that "school instruction—even religious instruction in the schools—is largely influenced by a standpoint that rejects the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . The basis of education is not the Bible but myths." Under the protection of Hitler a National Socialist faith has been formulated, with a creed and ceremonies, and children are compelled to take part in this degrading cult. "Christian schools are being transformed step by step into schools of racial ideology."

Thus far we have had no explanation of the Synod's protest by the German Ambassador at Washington. Does he still think he can make Americans believe that under the Nazi rule even the elemental decencies of public and private life are respected?

CIVIL SERVICE

ALREADY the largest employer of labor in the world, the Federal Government will add thousands to the rolls in the next few years. Whether these men and women are to be chosen because they are good political hacks, or because they are fitted for their work, will depend upon Congress. The political system gives us poor results at a high price, and discourages competent men from entering the Federal service. The National Civil Service Reform Association lays the blame for the "loot" system on Congress. How long will the people bear with this scandal?

THE OBLIGATIONS OF OR

REPRESENTATIVE Lamneck, of Ohio, agrees with Father Walsh of Georgetown University that civil war is raging in at least three States of the Union. The larger steel mills have signed contracts with the Committee for Industrial Organization, and for the moment all is peace. The independent mills, exercising their legal right under the Wagner Act, have declined to sign any agreement with unions organized under the Committee's influence. The result is war, civil war, and as men are shot down, the civil authorities stand by helplessly wringing their hands.

It may seem absurd that the steel operators, while willing to deal collectively with the unions, refuse to sign any contract with them. Tom M. Girdler, chairman of the Republic Steel Corporation and allied companies, states his reasons for this refusal in a letter released to the public on June 15. Setting aside Mr. Girdler's account of the outrages committed, as he claims, by union organizers, we come to the gist of his contention. It is, briefly, that a contract cannot be signed with an irresponsible party.

The C. I. O., in Mr. Girdler's opinion, has shown itself to be utterly irresponsible. It has broken numerous contracts signed with other employers, it has countenanced, if it has not actually planned, campaigns of violence against employers and the innocent public, and in his company alone has cost the employees more than \$3,000,000 in wages. The Republic Steel Corporation, as an incorporated body, is held responsible by law for its actions, and for those

USE THE VETO

FOR once we part company with the Association. Congress has its sins, but here it is not the only sinner. The executive departments also may fittingly wear a white sheet. The President has lately warned Congress to show more consideration for the civil-service system, and the warning was overdue. But of all the bills enacted during the last four years, putting civil service out of the picture, not one was followed by a veto and a vigorous message of protest. To praise the plan of appointing employees for merit only is good, but one veto is better than a dozen sermons.

S OF ORGANIZED LABOR

of its employees while engaged in the company's business. The C. I. O. is not held responsible by law, and can actually carry on campaigns of violence, including violation of contracts, and escape legal responsibility.

We do not wholly agree with Mr. Girdler's indictment, but unless his position and the position of many for whom he speaks is understood, we must look forward to an unbroken series of labor battles by bullets and in the courts. The reluctance of many employers to deal with the C. I. O. is founded on their belief that this body cannot legally be held to its contracts.

Whatever the reason, it is evident that thus far the Wagner Act intended to prevent strikes has failed miserably. In our judgment, it will continue to fail unless it is amended to fix the legal obligations and liabilities of employees as well as of employers. Whether legal responsibility can be best fixed by requiring all labor unions to be incorporated by law, is a question not easily answered. It may be observed, however, that this is the solution suggested by Mr. Justice Brandeis whose acquaintance with labor problems is intimate and whose friendship for the wage-earner is undoubted. Will the C. I. O. consider it?

Whatever the answer to this problem may be, an answer must be speedily found. Neither capital nor labor can be permitted to eat its cake and have it. In the words of Leo XIII, faith must be kept inviolably, and rights must be respected wherever they are found.

THE COURT LIVES

SENATE report No. 711, Seventy-fifth Congress, First Session, entitled *Reorganization of the Judiciary* will rank as a great State paper. Its importance at the present moment justifies the citation in this column of the "Summary," presented by Senator McCarran for Senator King, the first of the Ten Signers. In the opinion of a majority of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, the following judgment must be passed on the President's plan for the reorganization of the Federal bench.

"We recommend the rejection of this bill as a needless, futile, and utterly dangerous abandonment of constitutional principle.

"It was presented to the Congress in a most intricate form and for reasons that obscured its real purpose.

"It would not banish age from the bench, nor abolish divided decisions.

"It would not affect the power of any court to hold laws unconstitutional nor withdraw from any judge the authority to issue injunctions.

"It would not reduce the expense of litigation nor speed the decision of cases.

"It is a proposal without precedent and without justification.

"It would subjugate the courts to the will of Congress and the President, and thereby destroy the independence of the judiciary, the only certain shield of individual rights.

"It contains the germ of a system of centralized administration of law that would enable an executive so minded to send his judges into every judicial district in the land to sit in judgment on controversies between the Government and the citizen.

"It points the way to the evasion of the Constitution and establishes the method whereby the people may be deprived of their right to pass upon all amendments of the fundamental law.

"It stands now before the country, acknowledged by its proponents as a plan to force judicial interpretation of the Constitution, a proposal that violates every sacred tradition of American democracy.

"Under the form of the Constitution it seeks to do that which is unconstitutional.

"Its ultimate operation would be to make this Government one of men rather than one of law, and its practical operation would be to make the Constitution what the executive or legislative branches of the Government choose to say it is—an interpretation to be changed with each administration.

"It is a measure which should be so emphatically rejected that its parallel will never again be presented to the free representatives of the free people of America." (*Report*, p. 23.)

Reserving this great document for future comment, one consideration may here be suggested. With the passing of years, many Americans have lost the true concept of the purpose of the Supreme Court of the United States. If we may refer to Dickens and his Tony Veller, Sr., it would seem that they regard the Court as an instrument of punish-

ment which can be avoided only by a successful alibi. The true perspective shows us the Court as the last refuge for men persecuted by the Government, the one power that will rise to defend the rights which our forefathers sought to guarantee through the Constitution to the humblest citizen. True, the Court is an arm of the Government, but it is the power, and ultimately, the only power, which can intervene between a persecuting Government and the citizen who stands at bay impotent in the defense of his God-given rights.

We do not vision President Roosevelt as one who wishes to invade the rights of any citizen. But in the life of nations the life of one executive is but a day. The power that might, conceivably, be entrusted safely to him, might become a scourge in the hands of another, but in his bill for the reorganization of the judiciary, he asks for an authority which no man should have in a free government of free men. For this Government of ours is, and under God must forever remain, a Government of laws not of men.

PALE PINK WASHINGTON

IN a radio address on June 15, General Hugh Johnson said that communications from the White House, and legislation suggested by the Executive since the first of the year, are gradually pushing us into a new form of government. That form is "government by the Executive, with little if any popular participation."

The General does not lay the blame for this drift on the President. He finds that it is initiated by "an obscure pink fringe of brilliant young radical intellectuals." The purpose of these young men is no secret, he thinks, to anyone at Washington. As we pointed out in these pages four years ago, there is a group at Washington to whom the Constitution and all that it implies is anathema. It must be replaced by a document fashioned to the desire of their shallow minds and their immature judgments.

Assuredly, it is always possible to change the framework of this Government. But patriots will agree with Washington, "Let there be no change by usurpation . . . the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed." They will turn in disgust from planners, pale pink or dark red, in whom they detect that spirit styled by Washington "love of power and proneness to abuse it."

It may be folly, we admit, to quote the authority of Washington to a pale pink. He can tell you that Washington never listened to a radio, never fled across the country in an aeroplane, never looked at a flag with forty-eight stars. He is distinctly of the past, and the times have moved beyond him. The times, alas, have changed, but man's greed for power and his proneness to abuse it are as strong as they were in the eighteenth century, and at Washington they are stronger.

It would be a pity were the social objectives which are found in some of the New Deal plans to be sicklied o'er by this pale pink still prevalent in

Washington. Many of the President's advisers never did appeal to us, and some of those lately added appeal to us even less. We need an independent Executive as well as an independent Court and an independent Congress.

OUR SOUL'S FOOD

NIGHT was drawing on, and still the people clung to Our Lord. They had been with Him for three days, and the food they had brought with them was nearly exhausted. Our Lord Who had been nourishing their souls with His blessed doctrine was not unmindful of their bodily necessities. "If I send them away fasting to their homes, they will faint in the way," He observes to His Apostles in the Gospel read tomorrow (Saint Mark, vii, 1-9) "for some of them come from afar off."

This Gospel should confirm our confidence that when we do what we can, God's loving Providence will supply all that is needful. These good people were in a somewhat desolate country on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee; indeed, Saint Mark calls it a "wilderness." It would have been difficult, perhaps impossible, for them to obtain the food necessary on their homeward journey, but Our Lord solves this problem for them. On being told that in all the crowd there were only seven loaves and a few little fishes, He bids the people sit down upon the ground. Then, giving thanks, He breaks the loaves and the Apostles distribute them, and after blessing the dish of fish, He bids the Apostles let the people take all that they wish. All "were filled, and they took up that which was left of the fragments, seven baskets." By His power as God, Jesus had multiplied this small stock of food to relieve the temporal needs of His people.

It is indeed clear from the story of this miracle that the Heart of Our Lord sympathizes with us, even in our temporal needs. Again and again He comes to our aid in ways unknown or unnoted to help us long before we can begin to feel the pinch of necessity. But while Our Lord will certainly care for us, it is not forbidden us to lay our temporal cares before Him, begging His help. The Gospels give many examples of how Our Lord after answering prayers that seem not only importunate but even inopportune, praises the faith and perseverance of the petitioner. Nor can we forget that He Who bade us pray "Thy kingdom come," also taught us to beg our Father in Heaven, "Give us this day our daily bread." We are not forbidden to ask for temporal favors, provided that we ask with resignation to God's Holy Will.

But above all, this miraculous banquet on the shores of Galilee is a type of that heavenly banquet which Our Lord prepares for our souls in the Most Blessed Eucharist. Unhappily we who are careful to provide food for the body too often think but little of that Food for our souls which is His very Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity. In seeking the things that are needful on earth, may we never forget the infinitely greater interests of our immortal souls.

CHRONICLE

THE CONGRESS. June 10, the Dies Immigration Bill, putting more teeth into statutes for the deportation of "gun-carrying" criminal aliens, passed the House, went to the Senate. . . . June 11, the Senate Post-office Committee ordered an inquiry into the charges of interference with the mails in the steel strike areas. . . . June 11, the House voted to extend the "nuisance" taxes for two years. . . . June 12, the Senate Appropriations Committee voted favorably on the Byrnes amendment to the administration relief bill. The amendment would make local districts pay at least forty percent of the cost of all new WPA projects. . . . June 14, the Senate Judiciary Committee submitted to the Senate its report on the proposal of President Roosevelt to reorganize the courts. The committee report advised that the bill "be not passed." It denounced the measure as "a needless, futile, and utterly dangerous abandonment of constitutional principles." The proposal, the committee said, "violates every sacred tradition of American democracy." The Senate was asked to reject the proposal so emphatically "that its parallel will never again be presented to the free representatives of the free people of America." The bill was presented to Congress in a most intricate form and for reasons that obscured its real purpose, the report asserted. It further declared that the President's bill was without precedent or justification, and intended to subjugate the courts to the will of Congress and the President, and thus destroy the independence of the judiciary. . . . June 15, the Administration's legislative farm program was shelved for this session by the Senate. . . . The joint Congressional committee to investigate tax dodging was appointed. Chairman Doughton denied its purpose was to persecute wealth. Representative Treadway, of Massachusetts, said the inquiry was designed "to cover up the President's mistakes." Representative Fish of New York urged the committee to ascertain if Mr. Roosevelt had deducted losses from the operation of his farm. . . . June 16, Representative Celler, of New York, introduced a bill calling for \$700,000 for erection of a Government-owned broadcasting station. . . . June 15, Representative William P. Connery, Jr., of Massachusetts, died. He was chairman of the House Labor Committee and had piloted most of the New Deal labor legislation through the House. Born in Lynn, forty-eight years ago, Mr. Connery went to Montreal, then Holy Cross College, fought in France. He was an actor, a manufacturer of candy, and then a Congressman.

THE PRESIDENT. Announcement was made on June 16 of a three-day conference on an island in Chesapeake Bay between President Roosevelt and the Democratic members of Congress, to be held over the week-end of June 27. Charges of Roosevelt dis-

courtesy to Congress, ruffled Congressional feelings over the manner in which the President ignored them in the preparation of his Court-packing plan, led the White House to arrange the meeting in an effort to heal party wounds, informed sources said. . . . June 15, the President revealed a study is under way for balancing the budget through a hoped-for increase in the national income that would result in abolition of relief. The plan was in the study stage, he said. The national debt was expected to reach the sum of thirty-six billion dollars at the end of the current fiscal year.

THE STRIKE SITUATION. On June 13, John L. Lewis ordered approximately 9,500 miners to cease working in seventeen mines owned by the Bethlehem Steel Company and the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Corporation, as a means of bringing increased pressure upon these companies. . . . Governor Murphy of Michigan called out a battalion of the National Guard to preserve order in Monroe, Mich., as 10,000 followers of Lewis, gathered from three States, held a meeting in a park outside the city to protest the breaking of a picket line there. . . . Monroe deputies had smashed picket lines, permitting 500 men to return to their jobs. . . . Riots, entailing numerous injuries, were reported at the strike-bound plant of the Republic Steel Corporation in Youngstown, Ohio. Efforts of Governor Davey to effect a settlement were unsuccessful. . . . In Pontiac, auto workers closed General Motors plants to demonstrate for the Monroe steel strikers. June 11, five thousand men struck in the Chevrolet foundry plant at Saginaw, Mich. Railroad brotherhoods called a strike on the Conemaugh & Black Lick Railroad, which supplies the Bethlehem Steel Company's Cambria plant in Johnstown, Pa. At this plant, in clashes between police and pickets, sixteen men were critically injured and others less seriously. June 16, pickets at the Cambria plant surrounded a Negro on his way to work. In the ensuing conflict three men were stabbed. Mayor Daniel J. Shields, of Johnstown, Pa., telegraphed to President Roosevelt: "I earnestly appeal to John L. Lewis, through you as our President, to withdraw the murderous element that now infests our city." A case of kidnapping was charged to pickets. State police invaded Johnstown to restore order. The rioting was said to have frightened many non-union workers, deterred them from again attempting to enter the plant. . . . On June 15, President Roosevelt expressed the belief that companies willing to make oral agreements with labor should put these agreements into writing. The issue in the steel strikes is just that—the C.I.O. demands a written contract; the companies refuse to make other than an oral one. . . . June 12, Republic Steel Corporation re-

quested the United States District Court in Washington for a mandamus writ to compel Postmaster General Farley to order post offices in Warren and Niles, Ohio, to deliver "all matter properly mailable" to people in struck plants.

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AT HOME. June 13, the Department of Commerce announced the national income produced in the United States increased in 1936 by nearly nine billion dollars, a sixteen per cent jump above 1935. . . . June 10, the National Association of Manufacturers denounced the Black-Connery wage-hour bill as providing a "strait-jacket" for American industry. . . . June 13, the Brookings Institution revealed the Federal Government paid "more than half a million dollars in 1936 to persons engaged in full-time or allocated part-time publicity work." The report of the Institution indicated this was illegal. . . . June 10, the Federation of Catholic Physicians Guilds meeting in Atlantic City, denounced the birth-control resolution of the American Medical Association. It said: "The practice of artificial contraception for any reason is a perversion of the moral right order of things. . . . God alone is the absolute master of man and his destiny. . . . The Federation rejects as untrue and unscientific the current widespread pagan philosophy of life." . . . The United States received only one payment on the war debt installments,—that from Finland. Great Britain, France, other defaulting nations, wrote in they would not pay.

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SPAIN. Nationalist artillery blasted, Nationalist planes rained tons of explosives upon, the Basque defenses, and on June 12, General Fidel Davila broke the far-famed "iron ring," last defense of Bilbao. General Franco on a visit to the Basque sector saw his troops pour through the breaches, push on to within a mile and a half of Bilbao on the northeast. The following days saw a methodical investment by the Franco legions of the territory southeast and northeast of the beleaguered city. They advanced steadily along the coast, then proceeded down the eastern bank of the Nervion River and occupied Las Arenas. The port of Bilbao was closed. It was felt that Franco would not order the occupation of Bilbao until his troops had penetrated closer on the southwest, west and northwest terrain surrounding the city. More than 5,000 prisoners were captured by the Nationalist push. Within Bilbao, Basques struggled to prevent Anarchists from burning the city. . . . Great Britain finally succeeded in working out a formula under which Germany and Italy agreed to return to the non-intervention committee and the patrol of the Spanish coast.

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FRANCE. A serious Cabinet crisis threatened France. Menaced by one of the worst financial situations the country has seen for years, the Blum Government sought dictatorial powers for six weeks in an effort to prevent financial disaster. In the beginning of an all-night session of the Chamber of Deputies,

June 16, the Communists, acting on orders from Moscow, announced they would not support Blum. They felt they could force him to resign and seize important posts in the Cabinet that would then be formed. All night they refused to change their attitude. At 5 A.M. morning newspapers appeared with headlines announcing that the Communists were breaking with the Popular Front at the bidding of Moscow. Fearful of adverse publicity, another Communist meeting was hurriedly held. It voted to support Blum. The Government plea for six-weeks rule by decree in the financial realm passed the Chamber. Revolt was growing among Radical Socialists against the Blum labor policy. Fear of an authoritarian working-class state was increasing.

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RUSSIA. Eight high ranking generals of the Red Army were sentenced to death as traitors, June 12. Among the doomed prisoners was Marshal Mikhail N. Tukhachevsky, one of the most popular leaders of the Red Army. The others were: Generals A. I. Kork, I. E. Yakir, I. P. Uborevitch, Robert P. Eide-man, B. M. Feldman, K. V. Putna, and V. M. Primakov. . . . The army leaders died before a firing squad the same day they were sentenced. . . . June 14, twenty-eight executives and employees of the Amur section of the Trans-Siberian Railway were shot. . . . June 16, Alexander G. Chervikov, President of the White Russian Soviet Socialist Republic, committed suicide. . . . A vast witch hunt appeared to be in progress. Thousands were dropped from the Communist party rolls. The ruthless purge revealed chaotic dissension within the Soviet regime. At Minsk, N. M. Goloded, President of the White Russian Council of Commissars, together with ten former Commissars, and numerous members of the central executive committee were arrested. A huge conspiracy to unseat Joseph Stalin was rumored. I. B. Gamarnik, former Vice Commissar of Defense, killed himself June 1. . . . In the city of Ordjonikidze in the Caucasus, 5,363 members were dropped from the Communist party. At Rostov more than thirty party officials were in jail. . . . June 15, the Second International (Socialist) agreed to discuss with the Third International (Communist) joint action to aid the Reds in Spain. . . .

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FOOTNOTES. June 14, the Dail Eireann approved President de Valera's draft Constitution. July 1, the Irish people will vote on the proposed Constitution, decide whether to continue the de Valera Government in power. . . . June 15, in London, the Imperial Conference came to an end. . . . June 16, the Hitler Government made it a crime to contribute money to any Protestant Church administration which is not Nazi-controlled. Sixty-five Protestant pastors were in concentration camps or undergoing other forms of punishment. . . . An heir to the Bulgarian throne was born June 16, to Queen Joanna and King Boris. . . . "Go back, uphold your Faith in Germany where a blind battle rages against God and the Church of Christ," Pope Pius, told newly ordained priests, June 16.

CORRESPONDENCE

STREET SELLING

EDITOR: Your article, *Street Sellers Vie With Communists* (June 12) must give to the uninformed the impression that bringing Catholic literature to the masses is something new. Therefore, as an illustration of what has already been done in this line, I would like to give a brief record of the results of fifty years experience in selling the *Catholic News* on the streets of New York.

In this half century the *Catholic News* has sold as many as 25,000 copies a week on the streets of New York and as high as 200,000 a week throughout the nation. There never has been any interference with the sale by Reds or Communists. In fact, at the present time many newsdealers who are Communists have the *Catholic News* for sale. True, while resting on newsstands we have some strange neighbors, but we stick and make no objection. Today on over 4,000 newsstands in metropolitan New York the *Catholic News* is for sale.

During these years many have dedicated themselves to the apostolate of spreading the Catholic press among non-Catholic organizations and individuals. We have hundreds of names on our mailing list for such purposes as keeping persons antagonistic to the Church informed on Catholic matters through getting a Catholic newspaper which carries the news and views of Catholic events. Catholic Actionists who so desire are supplied with copies at special prices for distribution among Communists and others.

Only this past winter the sales promotion for the series of articles on Communism by Monsignor Sheen resulted in a wider interest in Catholic papers. Our campaign, by advertising this series, resulted in the sale of thousands of copies and put the *Catholic News* in the forefront of every newsstand in the subway, elevated and on the streets. Hence this newer phase of selling mentioned in the article AMERICA published is interesting only so far as it is further evidence that Catholic papers are bought and read. For many years the established Catholic newspapers have made strenuous efforts to reach the general reader on the streets of all American cities.

New York, N. Y.

CHARLES H. RIDDER

STRAIGHT FURROW

EDITOR: What puzzles me is that your correspondent in Missouri (May 29) is puzzled. I think all the instances she cites show that we are working together beautifully, and working hard.

The *Pittsburgh Catholic* was just the one to check up on *Our Sunday Visitor*. We'd rather have our brother show us our mistakes, even if it is in public

—where the mistake was made—than one of the neighbors.

Someone took the *Commonweal* to task? Fine! When we read both sides we begin to do our own thinking.

Dr. Curran and Dorothy Day did things? Splendid! They both had the highest motives in their doings. Dr. Curran hoped to arouse an easy-going public to the menace at their doors; Dorothy Day called attention to the fact that instead of beheading one monster, their meeting was begetting another—misguided, uncontrolled zeal.

And so it goes. But it is just this tugging on this side and that, that keeps us in the middle way. I believe it was no random choice our Lord made when He likened the building of the Kingdom of God to the plowing of a field. Did you ever watch the way the man behind the plow straddles the trench, leans this way and that, draws on one rein then on the other, staggers and tugs until finally he has a straight, deep furrow for his pains? The Communists would be much better off if they had more tugging in their ranks. Where there is no resistance one tends, like a lost man, to travel in a circle—sometimes a vicious circle. If we Catholics are forever shoving one another back on the road at least it implies that we have a road, and that we know its boundaries well enough to realize when one or the other of us has wandered off. We aren't lost. Which is more than can be said for those who, like the music, blissfully go round and round.

On with the check-mating!

Washington, D. C.

M. K.

ZERO INTEREST

EDITOR: In AMERICA (June 5) Charles C. Chapman managed to review *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* by John Maynard Keynes without coming closer to the purpose of the book than stating that Keynes holds that the rate of interest plays an important part in setting a limit to the level of employment. One paragraph from Keynes presents his theory that interest is the villain in the economic piece:

If I am right in supposing it to be comparatively easy to make capital-goods so abundant that the marginal efficiency of capital is zero, this may be the most sensible way of gradually getting rid of many of the objectionable features of Capitalism. For a little reflection will show what enormous social changes would result from a gradual disappearance of a rate of return on accumulated wealth. A man would still be free to accumulate his earned income with a view to spending it at a later date. But his accumulation would not grow. . . . He would simply be in the position of Pope's father, who, when he retired from business, carried a chest of guineas with him to his villa and met his household expenses from it as required.

In this Keynes implies that without interest on money or capital there would tend to be hoarding; but hoarding would be unnecessary because money in the bank would be safer without an interest charge and at the same time it would be available for investment in private homes at a very low charge, representing the bank's overhead—though it might be termed interest.

Keynes' ideal of the reduction of the rate of interest to zero is something he believes to be new and the process of attaining it intelligible only to professional economists. But for nearly twenty years I have endeavored to make the readers of AMERICA know the road to perpetual prosperity—the same road that Keynes points out. In an AMERICA article entitled *Foreign Trade* (December 7, 1918) I said:

If capital had no interest-earning power, it would not mean poverty but prosperity. It would only lose its earning power by reason of its abundance, because of the ease with which capital could be accumulated.

Keynes frankly admits that he is treading along unfamiliar paths, and he has not yet reached the point where he can clearly see that it is only the rate of increase in population that fixes the limit of the effective rate of pure interest—though he does say that certain communities "ought to be able to bring down the marginal efficiency of capital in equilibrium approximately to zero within a single generation."

Perhaps Keynes will prompt Catholic economists to inquire into the recognized sin of the Middle Ages. They will find, I believe, that it is the only economic sin of the present day. A five-per-cent rate of interest gives the capitalists a standing claim to twenty per cent of the national income, which represents every dollar of the national income that does not go to labor.

Providence, R. I.

M. P. CONNERY

COUNTER-ATTACK

EDITOR: It is important that we think out a true Christian strategy in dealing with Communism. If we don't, we are liable to be moved by panic to stamp down Communists as if they were mad dogs and not men.

The latest Encyclical is a model of moderation, striking the true keynote of the Catholic counter-attack on Communism. Pius XI devotes one-fifth of his letter to exposing what's wrong with Communism and four-fifths to setting forth what all believers must do to avert Communism. Nowhere do I find the use of force or violence suggested, except upon ourselves. The easiest way we can upset the whole Communist scheme is by first setting our own house in order. If we don't, then we shall have either Communism or Fascism; and clearly the latter is unchristian no less than the former.

Assuredly Catholics can make use of their civil rights of self-defense. We do not have to leave the scene free for unscrupulous Communist action. But just as assuredly we can't fight evil with evil when

we have always insisted that two wrongs never make a right. Following the program of Pius XI, we must fight evil with good. It is the evident duty of every Catholic demonstration against Communists to show to the Communists and citizens of our country that the Catholic Church is as unequivocally opposed to the ghastly evils of our capitalistic system as she is to the materialistic doctrines and unscrupulous policies of Marxian monopolists. Even more so, because, in the words of the American Bishops' *Statement on the Present Crisis* (April, 1933) "The real authors of violent and bloody revolution in our times are not the radicals and Communists, but the callous and autocratic possessors of wealth and power who use their position and their riches to oppress their fellows."

New York, N. Y.

PRIEST

CONFRATERNITY

EDITOR: I wish to bring to the attention of your readers the existence of a confraternity whose purpose it is to foster devotion to the Holy Ghost. This organization, by name the "Pious Union in Honor of God the Holy Ghost," was founded by the zealous Capuchin Father John Mary and was approved by His Holiness Pope Benedict XV in his Brief of December 30, 1920. As there is no center of the Pious Union located in the United States, persons must apply for membership by sending full name, residence and small offering to the following address: The Father Director, Franciscan Monastery, Olton, Birmingham, England.

I am asking you to print this information in the belief that many of your readers will be pleased to enroll in this confraternity "that piety may increase and be influenced towards the Holy Ghost, to whom especially all of us owe the grace of following the paths of virtue and good works." (From the Apostolic Brief.)

Brookline, Mass. REV. WILLIAM J. MCCARTHY

HISTORIAN DISAGREES

EDITOR: I thought I would call your attention to an article by David Gordon which appeared in AMERICA for May 22, in which Msgr. John Peter Camus, Bishop of Belley, is used very shabbily, to the extent of being called a silly, ridiculous man, a non entity; and even his fine book, *The Spirit of Saint Francis of Sales* is therein depreciated. Bishop Camus may have had his faults, but it seems to me that it does not become a Catholic layman to give such epithets to a Catholic bishop; so much the more that Pastor, who is a good appreciator of men, in his *History of the Popes*, Vol. 26, p. 53, ranks Bishop Camus among those splendid members of the French Hierarchy who at the beginning of the seventeenth century contributed much to the Catholic revival after the troubled times of the Huguenots, and gave a powerful impetus to the literary and ascetical awakening that ensued.

Los Gatos, Calif.

JOSEPH PERRON, S.J.

LITERATURE AND ARTS

AN AMERICAN PROBLEM, NEITHER ROMANTIC NOR FREUDIAN

LEONARD FEENEY, S.J.

ON every big Italian boat sailing from Naples to New York—save perhaps in the dead slough of the winter season—you will find a group of what are best designated “healthy, wealthy Americans.” Where this inexhaustible supply of star-spangled-bannered folk who are both financial and fit comes from, and how they manage to be returning from Europe so frequently, I do not know. But there is a generous collection of them on every ship.

They usually travel in full or partial families: a father, mother, two daughters and a son; a mother, daughter and two sons; a father, son and daughter; occasionally a lone daughter or a lone son affiliated with some friends. The first thing one notices about these healthy, wealthy Americans is their indescribable sameness. They are so stereotyped in kind one could almost write a formula for them. I should like to undertake such a formula for the father in a family of four, which includes a vivacious, gaunt, over-painted mother; a rather handsome college-boy son (probably Princeton); and an athletic daughter who has been completely finished at a finishing school. Father’s official title among his dear ones is *Dad*.

Dad: a moderately tall, smooth shaven, slightly bald banking or business man, between fifty and sixty; well tanned, white-trousered, fond of a cigar; with a full-toned, monotonously masculine voice, and a self-contented, deliberately sustained smile; whose main chore at sea is to point out things: to ask the family if they have seen this or that, report on the ship’s log, sight objects on the horizon, whales, other boats, etc., and point them out.

Dad is always the first of his party to rise in the morning, usually eats breakfast alone, and never gets seasick. He reads through three books while crossing: the best-selling novel of the year, a detective story and a popular book about sociology or finance. Of the first two books he invariably reports, “a darn good story”; of the third, “some interesting things in it, but I don’t quite agree with him.”

When the ship docks *Dad* is the first to spy friends or relatives standing on the pier, shouting “There’s Laura waving to us!”; and then “Come

on Ida. Come on children. Has everyone got everything? Son, have you got the keys to the trunks?”, etc., etc.

Dad is intensely preoccupied with trying to keep fit, with keeping young. Whenever he meets a stranger the very first thing he wants to discover is the stranger’s age, and even when not bold enough to ask it, is always sizing it up, arriving at some secret, plausible figure.

Dad likes nothing better than to be handled as though he were a youngster, relishes nothing better than a good slap on the back. He loves to be asked to go golfing, and always has an imminent fishing trip memorandumed in the back of his mind. He dances too, and is equally at home with young or old ladies; dances well, indeed, but would dance much better if he didn’t try to be so “young” at it. For the past fifteen years, while being perfunctorily kissed, hand-shaken or back-slapped on his birthday, he has never failed to say “I feel as young as a colt.”

Dad is a persistent taker of turkish baths, devotes hours weekly to being shaved, rubbed, manicured, pomaded, etc.; has spent a small fortune on hair remedies, treatments, etc. (some of them really gruesome). He gargles and tooth-brushes faithfully, and washes religiously once an hour. Towels, other than being slightly rumpled, look as clean after he has used them as before. About a hundred times a day he flexes his muscles to see if they are still working.

Dad is constantly on the point of “cutting down” on things, on eating, smoking, drinking, and is capable in short spells of acute acts of self-denial. He has read uncountable health books, and is forever giving his family little therapeutic exhortations, such as “Come on now, let’s all get to bed!”—a remark in which he is seldom if ever noticed; “Come on now, let’s all get some fresh air!” At table his almost perpetual incantation into the ears of his daughter is “Eat slowly, darling!” “Darling” looks at him alternately pityingly or annoyed, seems momentarily protected against the ravages of indigestion, or else irritated at the thought of its possibility, and then goes on eating about as before.

Yet in this phrase "Eat slowly, darling!" *Dad's* features assume for one flashing instant a benevolence, innocence, lovability. The maid who serves them dinner at home has often noticed this.

Barber-shop, brokerage and bridge: these are pretty nearly the high spots in *Dad's* life: sticking-plaster and stock-market reports, interspersed with a trip to Europe. In Europe as in America *Dad* is greatly annoyed at the slum areas in the large cities, at the faces of the underpaid and the undernourished. "Can't the Government do something for these people?" he always remarks in a sudden burst of charity. "Haven't they got any public welfare organizations?" Twice a year his conscience troubles him in these matters and drives him to his pocketbook. He never fails to contribute a generous cheque annually to the Red Cross and the Community Chest drives. *Dad* always purrs contentedly at dinner on the days of these donations, always sleeps better within the octave.

Though doctors have never been able to explain it, nor detect it in the prescribed six months' physical examination, *Dad* makes his departure from this world by one of two routes: apoplexy, or coronary thrombosis. He had been feeling "as fit as a fiddle" just before dinner. Shortly after dinner he swooned in his chair. *Son* ran to his assistance. *Daughter* screamed. *Mother* became tearful through smelling salts.

"Good old dad!"

"Oh I can't stand it. It's perfectly horrible!"

"Be sure to get the very best doctors."

The very best doctors come, three of them, so as to hold "a consultation." Sufficient drugs are administered so as to keep *Dad's* consciousness out of reach of all pain. It is invariably reported in the papers that he "died in a coma," which is not true. He was put in a coma by variations of veronal, luminol and morphine, as the day and night nurses can testify. "The very best doctors" like an unconscious patient when they're stumped, so that they can "consult" with greater professional quiet and report to the prospective widow unannoyed by the indecorous accompaniment of groans. A groaning man does somehow give the impression of not being properly attended to.

Son attends the funeral manfully, in dark clothes, with bowed head. A minister is resurrected for the occasion and reads a text that is more impressive than comforting. *Son* escorts *Mother* who could walk, but prefers to be carried mostly. She keeps pressing a handkerchief to her lips, and in the end all but chews it. Something in her really wants to cry, if only to indicate that a vacuum of some sort has been arrived at; but she lacks any spiritual certitude toward the after-life capable of supporting tears. One can cry at a death, but not at an annihilation. One could rage; but there are sensible reasons for not becoming quite so forcible as that.

Daughter does not attend the funeral. Everyone agrees it is better for her not to. She spends a fortnight with friends at Greenwich or Darien, lives largely on stimulants and sedatives, and reads from end to end the year's volumes of *Liberty*, *Fortune*, *Time*, *Life* and other magazines with transcendental

names. In the end she gets coaxed into a recuperation by some vigorous sets of tennis and by some good sound plunges in a swimming pool.

(N. B. A novelist, which I am not, and a Freudian, which I am neither, will complain that I have sent *Dad* to his grave without any mention of the complex determinants of his life, the chorus girl, manicurist, stenographer, who lurks in the background and in whose company the amorous deficiencies of his career were recondited and recompensed. I omit these ladies deliberately. First, because I do not think they were necessarily there; and second, because it would require little art and no imagination to describe them. I stand on *Dad* as sufficiently tragic just as he is, without a single triangular movement in his affections, or a single blot against his moral integrity.)

CATHOLICISMS

HERESY draws its own picture, and writes its own vocabulary. You would agree to this first statement if you ever saw the Chancellor of Oxford—a bishop sent through a wet wash—awarding degrees to Oxford undergraduates, with a mace in his hand instead of a crozier, a cloak on his back instead of a cope, and a goodness-knows-what on his head instead of a mitre, and a few words of watered Latin still lingering in his mouth.

You would feel the same if you went up to a member of the Corpus Christi boat crew, on whose boat flag is emblazoned a pelican, the traditional bird of the Blessed Sacrament, (because it bruises its own breast to feed its young), and asked, "What is that bird inscribed on your college flag?" His answer would be, and was, in the case of the present correspondent, "I haven't the slightest idea."

The Oxford University athletes wear dark blue, because in the old Catholic days it was Our Lady's color. The Cambridge University athletes wear light blue, again because it was Our Lady's color. This started among colleges the custom of having a color as a college emblem. But why Harvard is crimson, or Yale blue, or Dartmouth green, nobody knows, not even Harvard, Yale and Dartmouth.

I wonder do we realize that "Bedlam" (as in Tom O'Bedlam) was once "Bethlehem"; because in the vigorous days of England's Catholicism a person who had lost his mind was treated as an "innocent," someone companionable for little Jesus.

The English have no notion why they should be so wary of the word "bloody," a word which seems very innocuous to an American. I have been told that it is a corruption of "by Our Lady," remembering that England was once called "Our Lady's Dowry," and that an expression of profanation in her regard was considered the highest blasphemy.

I am not in favor of indiscriminate oaths. But if a man must be driven to an oath, could anything be more tepid and ineffectual than "by Gum"; "by Jingo"; "by Jove"; "by Gosh"? And it ought not to be forgotten that in our extreme emergencies we in America are often driven to something as profane as "For the love of Mike!"

L. F.

BOOKS

MILK WITHOUT SOCIALISM OR SOCIALISM WITHOUT MILK?

THE REVOLUTION BETRAYED. By Leon Trotsky. Doubleday, Doran. \$2.50

ANYONE who reads Carleton Beals' searing account in the June 5 *Saturday Evening Post* of the John Dewey commission's supposed investigation of Leon Trotsky, will conclude that Mr. Trotsky succeeded in slipping a good many things over on his American admirers. He evaded questioning and kept their adoration, which is all that he wanted.

In view of Trotsky's acrobatic evasions, the same question occurs to anyone who reads his recent book. Is it a hoax or is it naked truth? In point of fact, it is a combination of both. Trotsky packs his anti-Stalin brief with innumerable facts, most of which can be verified from the daily press in Moscow or New York; draws very acute conclusions from these facts, while at the same time he tries to palm off on the reader the ridiculous idea that if he and not Stalin were in the saddle, the old Red mare would be loping along, and Socialism would shower equality and riches and love upon every man, woman and child in the Soviet Union.

From his height on the throne Stalin thunders to the world that the reason Socialism is not working to schedule in Russia is a villain, and that villain is Trotsky with his machinations. From his adobe hide-out in Mexico Trotsky shouts back that the reason Socialism in Russia is supplanted by an execrable bourgeois super-capitalism is a villain, which is bureaucracy.

Hate gives perspicuity to Trotsky, gives him sarcasm and grim humor. Mercilessly he tears every veil from Soviet socialist pretense. The present regime is a swing from "peasant egoism to forced unity"; it is the "same old gendarme only in a new uniform." "The theory that Socialism without milk is better than milk without Socialism has been abandoned."

The regime supports a privileged minority. Over and above mere functionaries sit 400,000 "dignitaries, leaders," a "ruling caste in the proper sense of the word."

The whole social structure is governed by the need of producing, but cannot quite succeed in doing it. "The Soviet root is just what it is not mighty enough for the Socialist trunk and leafage; human welfare." The "ruble's heel" is the high cost of production. Socially there is serfdom. "The director of the Soviet farm imposes upon the peasant renter conditions almost copied from the old landlord-peon contracts."

All these and countless other deplorable matters, such as the set-backs in the anti-religious program, concessions to bourgeois ideas of family morals, relinquishment of the abortion program, etc., merely prove to Trotsky that Socialism is not working because he is not there to work it. At times his analysis is especially acute, as when he notes that the peasants show more confidence in private property than they do in the collectives, since private concerns excel in the matter of insurance and increase in stock-breeding.

What is the practical value of Trotsky's book? It is extremely interesting if for no other reason than for the anomalous historic personality of its author, one of the co-authors of Bolshevism. It tells a vast number of truths which would not occur to a less sophisticated mind. But Trotsky scorns documentation for these truths. Rarely is any reference given; no chapters or verses in newspaper quotations. There is no index to its 308 pages. But it is an incomparably instructive criticism. One thing is certain, his hatred of religion. Plainly he declares (p. 164): "Socialism is not ascetic; on the con-

trary it is deeply hostile to the asceticism of Christianity. It is deeply hostile to its adherence to *this* world, and this *only*, to all religion."

What is Trotsky's practical attitude towards the present regime? What is he hoping to do about it; what are his proposals for getting rid of Stalin and bringing about the Permanent Revolution and the Bolshevik millennium? Not a word. And there will be no word, least of all to the Friends of Trotsky in New York. Trotsky says what he wants for publication purposes. The remaining chapters we may read in smoking ruins and the corpses of his enemies.

JOHN LAFARGE

PREJUDICED APPROACH TO LIFE OF GREAT QUEEN

MARIA THERESA, THE LAST CONSERVATIVE. By Constance Lily Morris. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.50

QUEENS of Europe have been the subject of many biographies during recent years, and frequently the authors themselves have been women. The latest of these depicts the life and times of the amazing Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria and "King" of Hungary. Constance Lily Morris is a graduate of Wellesley College and also studied at Oxford and Heidelberg Universities. Her husband was at one time United States Minister to Sweden. Mrs. Morris has lived much abroad and has had access to a wealth of new material in recently opened archives, which would seem to justify a new biography of this fascinating woman and queen.

It is a pity then that with her unusual opportunities for extensive research, Mrs. Morris has not acquainted herself with the Catholic view-point towards this great Catholic queen. She is careful to show the deeply religious nature of Maria Theresa, but an impression is given that this is a weakness rather than a splendid advantage. With a less prejudiced approach she would have given a truly delightful picture of a richly endowed personage.

The beauty, vivacity, inexhaustible energy, unflagging ardor for the cause of her people, her faithful love for her husband and the tender care for the sixteen children who were born to them, make for a fine inspiration in our own day. The chapters depicting the culture and charm of Vienna in those colorful days are fascinating. At twenty-three, she owed her accession to the throne of Austria to the carefully planned Pragmatic Sanction, which had been accepted by the powers of Europe before her Father's death, but which had to be fought for all over again as soon as the young and inexperienced Queen ascended the throne. Her persistent and implacable enemy was Frederick the Great of Prussia, whose methods and intrigue finally overwhelmed the aging Empress. She had to stand alone through these trials, as her husband Francis of Lorraine was not a success as a general, and hated wars; and in her latter years her son Joseph who succeeded her, was by nature and disposition opposed to nearly all her cherished dreams for the enrichment of her kingdom. Her youngest daughter was Marie Antoinette, the tragic Queen of France.

The book is more of a diatribe against the Catholic Church and the Jesuits in the eighteenth century than a picture of the faithful daughter of the Church. In paragraph after paragraph are reiterated the old falsehoods against the Jesuits with a seeming lack of understanding of the truth. Concerning the inoculation of the poor against smallpox during a terrible plague in 1767, the

book states, "She organized free inoculation for the poor, tempering the achievements of science by ordering the singing of the Te Deum in all the churches of Vienna." And in summing up the Queen's activities, in late years toward the close of her reign, the author again reveals an un-Catholic opinion in the following: "The relation of the Empress to the spiritual and mental side of the reign of enlightenment which spread over Europe in the eighteenth century was very much handicapped by her churchliness." And yet, on the very next page, inconsistently, we find, "and the establishment of the Theresianum, Jesuit school for boys . . . was a great contribution to the educational system." To quote again, "Also, considering the hypocrisy of the age in which she lived, it is not difficult to believe that she might have compromised with her conscience, especially as her religious training by the Jesuits was not averse to sacrificing the means to accomplish the end."

Is it too much to presume that this may be but one more slender thread in the ever thickening cable of anti-religious propaganda?
CATHERINE MURPHY

STRATOSPHERE INFLUENCE ON HUMAN GENETICS

STAR-BEGOTTEN. By H. G. Wells. The Viking Press.
\$1.75

IT IS very difficult to review a book by H. G. Wells, mainly because it is difficult to dissociate the book from Mr. Wells. He is right there on every page, preaching, pointing out, nudging your elbow, shouting into your ear. Now if you do not like Mr. Wells himself as you may know him from his works, the back-stairs lover of the *Autobiography*, the slipshod scholar of the *History*, it is a little hard to be fair to him or to this, his latest pseudo-scientific romance.

From page 12 to page 30 of *Star-Begotten*, Mr. Wells shoots a few sitting ducks, that is, he destroys the Fundamentalist Protestant position as exemplified in the beliefs of his hero. Then, having reduced the man, Joseph Davis, to a state of neurotic agnosticism, he plants an idea in his mind, permits the idea to run its devastating course, introduces some shrewd and witty satire on current affairs and concludes with a happy ending, full of sunny optimism for the future of the race.

In brief, this is the story of Mr. Wells's fantasy. Joseph Davis is married to a grave, shy girl, a Scottish Celt, who baffles his English bluntness with her remote and "fey" manner. They are about to have a child. Mr. Davis has had considerable success as a writer of pepped-up history, laudatory lives of Alexander and Napoleon, but he is disturbed in mind by what seems to him the gradual brutalization of the world and by the way in which his wife has grown away from him. After a meeting with a pair of scientific gentlemen who are reminiscent of the "mad scientist" of Hollywood thrillers, the alarming idea takes possession of his mind that inimical Martians are battering away at the human genes with cosmic rays, thus producing a new race of "star-begotten" monsters. The fear lest his wife produce such a child maddens him, but his child seems normal and after a while the father becomes almost normal too. He decides that the cosmic bombardment may be for the best, his wife admires him and all ends happily.

Meanwhile, news of the theory has leaked out, advertisers seize on it for sales campaigns, a Martian cocktail is invented, a great newspaper syndicate blames all the world's trouble on Martian interference and after the customary interval the whole commotion takes its place with the forgotten sensations of the past. Mr. Wells was a great spinner of yarns before he swamped himself in pseudo-science. The method and flow of this story are almost models for imitation and the submersion of Mr. Wells, the narrative artist, in Mr. Wells, the stuffed prophet, is the world's loss.

The author is a curious survival from the days when science was to remake the world, a relic of the Samuel Butler period, almost Ernest Pontifex in *propria persona*. His knowledge of scientific matters is wide but exceedingly shallow, his formal studies in science negligible. Better hands than mine have demolished him as a historian, but he has imagination, a style and a sort of cockney impudence in judgment that impresses the half-educated. No Pope has ever been so dogmatic in orthodoxy as Mr. Wells has been in heterodoxy. After reading *Star-Begotten* one wonders how a man can deny Christianity on professedly scientific grounds and perpetrate a story such as this, wherein airy creatures from beyond the stratosphere influence human genetics and the red planet Mars smiles or lowers (Mr. Wells did not decide which) upon the future of our species.

J. G. E. HOPKINS

BREAD AND WINE. By Ignazio Silone. Harper and Brothers. \$2.50

NOTHING that the present Italian government has done or is doing or shall attempt to do for its subjects can contribute in any lasting way to their happiness. That, in brief, is the thesis of this propaganda piece arranged in the form of a novel and adorned with many literary charms. It is a colorful story of Pietro Spina, an Italian student restless in exile, who worms his way back to his native land, heart set upon denouncing Mussolini and all the policies which are in operation under the Duce's leadership.

Disguised as Don Paolo, an ailing priest, the young revolutionist travels from one town to another catching cautiously for opportunities to indoctrinate his countrymen. His clerical garb, symbolic of a priesthood which he detests, shields him from the police but unexpectedly exposes him to the pieties of the peasants. It is this latter circumstance which provides most of the dramatic interest of the tale. Esteeming him as a saint, men and women flock to Don Paolo to confess themselves to him. Faced with the danger of arousing their suspicions if he refuses to absolve them, he simulates the Sacrament of Penance. That the people are utterly indifferent to his harangues on national freedom, and are anxious only to be loosed from their sins, irritates him to the point of disgust. His true identity finally becomes known to the authorities and at the close of the book he is in full flight for the mountains with the police hot upon his heels.

The author, who is himself an exile from Italy and might very well be the hero of his own story, cleverly leaves the reader in suspense as to the ultimate fate of Don Paolo. In the event that a sequel shall be written the humor might with profit be drawn from sources other than the base vulgarities of life which garnish the present volume.

A GLANCE AT THE EDITOR'S BOOKCASE

FROM the many writings which over a period of twelve years he has contributed to the *St. Francis Home Journal*, the Very Rev. Sigmund Cratz, O.M.Cap., has selected a series which he publishes under the title of *Intimacies* (Pittsburgh: St. Francis Home Journal. \$2). The short readings, some of them on the liturgical year, some on the Saints, are the very thing for a daily spiritual refreshment suitable to busy people, and packed with the wisdom of the cloister. Another book of spiritual consolation is *My Child Lives*, by the Rev. Alph. L. Memmesheimer (Benziger. \$1.25). The author has collected here a number of chapters offering consolation and hope to parents who have lost a child. This is a book which will bring comfort to many a sorrowing parent.

Young people generally like a little of history mixed with romance, and they will like Regina Kelly's *King*

Richard's Squire (Crowell. \$2), which has Chaucer's England for its setting. London in the fourteenth century is the locale, and a coronation in Westminster Abbey figures prominently. Chaucer himself comes into the tale, which is instructive as well as entertaining. Although *Recent Stories for Enjoyment* (Silver Burdett. \$1.28), which is edited by Howard Francis Seely and Margaret Roling, is a collection of short stories, chosen from contemporary authors, it is evidently meant as an English course text book for high-school students. Points for critical estimation are offered at the end of each story, and informing biographies of the authors. Altogether an excellent idea to induce people young, and not so young, to read something more solid than the pulps. Padre Alfonso is the author of *The Padre of the Plains* (Atlanta: Brown Pub. Co.), and he assures his readers that if the names of the characters are fictional, the incidents are facts. The story is good reading, and is very much like the life of a traveling missionary in the prairie country.

American history and letters are greatly enriched by *South After Gettysburg* (University of Pennsylvania Press. \$2), consisting of the letters of Cornelia Hancock from the Army of the Potomac, 1863-1865. Henrietta Stratton Jaquette edits the letters, which begin with one written from Gettysburg on July 7, 1863, after the young Quakeress had arrived to work among the Northern troops as a volunteer nurse. With no idea that she was contributing to national history, Cornelia Hancock wrote these letters to her mother and other members of her family, from the battlefield and hospitals where she served. American history is also the background of Samuel Chamberlain's *Open House in New England* (Brattleboro: Daye. \$3). Copiously illustrated with 217 photographs, the narrative tells the story of a great number of New England homes from Colonial days on, some of them having figured in history, and all of them now open to the public. The photographs are fascinating, and this splendid book exudes an atmosphere of peacefulness that belongs to bygone days.

If motion picture writers and reviewers of the same are on the lookout for a practical handbook, they will find it in Olga J. Martin's *Hollywood's Movie Commandments* (Wilson. \$2.75). Miss Martin was former secretary to our staff friend Mr. Joseph I. Breen, and evidently she knows what she is talking about. The Movie Code seems to be soundly based on moral principles. Whether the scenario writers will act up to it, and the public accept it in action is, possibly, another matter. Anyway, here are listed things that may not be done, and the manner in which other things must be done. Get the book, and see for yourself what the industry is doing to clean up the movies. *Out of the Test tube* (Emerson Books. \$3), is an expanded edition of Dr. Harry N. Holmes' popular story of chemistry, and how it enters into every sphere of modern life. Its 300 pages are embellished with 101 illustrations, and it is well nigh impossible to think of any matter concerning life today that is not related to the chemistry marvels so interestingly discussed by Dr. Holmes. The normal high-school boy will like this book. Then there is the Comte de Saint-Aulaire, who was French Ambassador to England, and before that a high official in the administration of French Morocco. The Count does not like the League of Nations, hence he has written *Geneva versus Peace* (Sheed & Ward. \$2.50), which we are justified in construing as an attack on the League, but which at the same time calls for respectful attention. M. de Saint-Aulaire shows himself to be one of the League's sternest critics. He looks upon it as nothing more than a diplomatic alliance between France and England; he declares that Bolshevism is the ally of Geneva; that Freemasonry and international Judaism have captured the League, and accuses England of being the principal stockholder in the League of Nations and Co., which is tough on the British taxpayers who foot a great deal of the bill. Probably not everyone will agree with all that the Count says. But he is a critic with such an authoritative background that his book should be widely read.

EARLIER this season I spoke in this column of a competition for a painting being conducted by the Liturgical Arts Society for the Reverend E. P. Graham of Canton, Ohio. Father Graham was led to hold this competition because he had never seen any representation of the forty Saints whose names make up the two lists in the Canon of the Mass, lists which every priest and many laymen must very nearly know by heart. Indeed an entire volume (in French) has been devoted to their origin and identity. And yet, so far as Father Graham knew, no artist has ever made use of this noble company for graphic representation.

This is the more unfortunate in that the lists evidently were framed to convey an idea of the Mystical Body: in them are deliberately included men and women of every kind and condition, all united in the bond of martyrdom. The Blessed Virgin, Saint John the Baptist, and the Apostles are all there; then come nine representatives of the Hierarchy, six Popes and three bishops; there are two deacons, a priest, and an exorcist; five laymen and seven lay women.

As was indicated before, the competition was carried on in accord with the best professional principles. Only persons who were invited could participate. Each of these contestants received a small payment for a sketch. Actually only twelve artists were invited. Out of the sketches received, a jury selected three to execute finished paintings, and again all three "finalists" received cash payments. The winner receives a more handsome prize.

The jury which selected the "finalists" and the winner was made up of seven distinguished men and women. Two are members of the clergy—Father Graham himself and the Reverend Anselm Strittmatter, O.S.B., a scholar who has devoted much of his life to early liturgical history. The remaining members of the jury were Bancel LaFarge, former President of the Liturgical Arts Society and a brother of Father LaFarge of the AMERICA staff; Miss Hildreth Melère, Vice-President of the Liturgical Arts Society and President of the Society of Mural Painters; Barry Byrne, a Catholic architect internationally known for his buildings in the Middle West and in Cork, Ireland; Jean Charlot, a Catholic mural painter of the Mexican school; and Dr. A. M. Frankfurter, Editor of the *Art News*.

By the time this notice appears, the winners of the competition will have been announced and the winning paintings will have been placed on exhibition at the Paul Reinhardt Galleries, 57th Street and Fifth Avenue, New York. The three "finalists" were Alfred Tulk of New York, Joan Cunningham of Rochester, N. Y., and Virginia Wood (the winner) of Washington, D. C., and New York.

Mr. Tulk's showed a high degree of technical excellence; his canvas was in many ways a fine example of virtuosity in painting. Unfortunately his color is rather dull and monotonous, and he has resorted to a trick of outlining each figure in white to give his picture clarity and depth. The result is not at all happy. Miss Cunningham's painting seemed to me the best as far as composition and color are concerned. It suffered, however, from two bad faults. The lettering of the inscription which runs across the top of the panel is incredibly bad; and the artist has indulged in a style of painting in the faces of her saints which gives most of them the air of being either asleep on their feet or else congenital idiots. It may be true that simplicity is a mark of sanctity, but not simplicity in the sense of distinctly sub-normal intelligence. Miss Wood's panel seems the logical choice, if only because it is extremely competent, has no unpleasant mannerisms, and is excellent in color and composition. It lacks spiritual comprehension, perhaps, and is not as sensitive as Miss Cunningham's. Yet I feel the jury has picked wisely.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE

FILMS

LAST TRAIN FROM MADRID. In their haste to capitalize on the present civil struggle in Spain, the producers of this film have tied together a few episodic stories in the *Grand Hotel* manner and seem to have spent most of their time in avoiding the pitfalls of controversy. The resulting picture is overburdened with heroics and sentimental clichés, further encumbering a plot which seems, unlike the titular train, to be going in all directions at once and finally arrives nowhere. Some hours before the departure of the last train out of embattled Madrid, we are given a passing glimpse into the lives of several persons; a convict on his way to the front who is helped to freedom by a buddy who is now a captain; the same officer, whose own safety is jeopardized by this act; an American newspaperman who befriends a soldierette; a soldier in an execution detail who refuses to shoot down innocent men. There is little attempt to connect these incidents except by allusion to the Valencia-bound train as a common refuge. There are moments of excitement and drama but interest, on the whole, is poorly sustained. The cast includes Lew Ayres, Lionel Atwill, Karen Morley and Dorothy Lamour. A cautious foreword disclaims any special pleading or partisanship and consequently the production may be viewed simply as melodrama of a fair order for adults. (Paramount)

RIDING ON AIR. Joe E. Brown, the hardy perennial, makes a happier appearance than usual in this typical story of a small-town boy making good in spite of himself. Although the theme is strongly reminiscent of past vehicles, there are enough novel twists to the plot to give it freshness and high amusement value. This time the hero is a country news reporter who wins some celebrity in a national contest and proceeds to use his influence unwisely. He induces his townspeople to finance the promotion of a friend's invention only to discover that the promoter imported from the city is a swindler. But resourceful Elmer finally proves the worth of the new radio beam in capturing a band of smugglers. The star is funny though highly mannered and he is ably supported by Guy Kibbee and Florence Rice. The picture is recommended as wholesome entertainment for the family. (RKO)

A DAY AT THE RACES. There is not a great deal to be said about this newest Marx brothers' concoction beyond the fact that it is characteristically insane, disconnected and leaning toward the seamy side of farce. The plot, if such a thing is discoverable beneath the rambling superstructure of gags and antics which the comedians upraise, seemingly on the spur of the moment, concerns a veterinary doctor who poses as a physician to save a young girl's sanitarium from financial ruin. The girl's fiancé, a singer, has gotten himself involved with a race horse and there is a constant shifting of interest from race track to hospital, with the Marx brothers bringing confusion upon both. If you are an addict, you will be amused, but be warned that the fun is rather rough and at times bordering on vulgarity. Maureen O'Sullivan and Allan Jones, who also sings excellently, manage the romance while the stars provide their usual brand of hilarity. The picture is for adults, in any case. (MGM)

ARMORED CAR. This is a run-of-the-mill gangster melodrama, dealing with the attempts of criminals to loot the cars of a prosperous collection agency. An ex-convict, whose past costs him his job with the company, joins the gang led by an organ-loving killer but only to trap them at work. It is a routine film, acted by Caesar Romero, Judith Barrett and Robert Wilcox and suitable for the family. (Universal)

THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS

EVENTS

THE trek to urban centers continued. . . . While Havana legislators expressed alarm over the growing scarcity of alligators in the Cuban jungles, Manhattan police were called to capture an alligator which was trying to get on a train in the New York subway. . . . Renewed fighting was reported on the Bilbao, Madrid, Youngstown, Johnstown and Monroe fronts. . . . The note of amity was still manifest in the correspondence between the United States and foreign nations. Great Britain, France and other countries forwarded letters revealing they will not pay up this year. The letters were said to show the very friendliest feeling toward this country. . . . The silver jubilee of the Bald Head Club of America was held in Connecticut. Of the famous bald-headed men produced by America, many have been members of the society: Taft, Bryan and others. Efforts to discover if James A. Farley is a member were unsuccessful. The mascot of the club is the bald-headed eagle. . . . How newspapers help their readers to correct blunders and omissions was illustrated in Santa Monica. A paper there emphasized the fact that bandits, in robbing a store, had overlooked fifty-five dollars. The bandits, anxious to rectify their error, called on the store a second time, gathered in the remaining shekels. . . . Hope for an eventual cure was held out to pop-eyed persons at a recent medical meeting. . . . The long-known tendency of men just saved from drowning to act naturally when coming to was illustrated in the Midwest. A youth jumped into a lake, dragged a drowning companion to shore, there resuscitated him. As the rescued one opened his eyes, he said: "Please lend me five dollars." . . . A remarkable instance of the changed status of woman in the modern world occurred in Canada. A white mouse appeared suddenly among a group of co-eds at a graduation. A woman caught the mouse, put it in her handbag, and the graduation went on. It was said to be the first time a mouse failed to break up a female graduation—statisticians, at least, could find no parallel.

A case from California illustrates how men's tempers will sometimes snap. A wife there, when visited by a battalion of relatives, compelled her husband to go out in the back yard and sleep in the chicken coop. His temper showed signs of slipping at this. Later when the wife taught his young son to swear at him, and then forced him to take her Pekinese dog out walking on the street in front of his old friends, his temper broke completely, neighbors said. . . . A laudable attempt to solve an age-old problem and produce a mule that would not kick appeared on the verge of triumph in Georgia. An inventor there announced he had succeeded in creating the world's first mechanical mule. Farmhands, teamsters, others who have at various times been kicked by mules, pronounced the invention a blessing. . . . A rather despicable deed was reported from the West. A Los Angeles detective, one of the nation's greatest footprint experts, retired as president of the International Footprint Association. The next day somebody stole his shoes, size twenty-four. . . . A new religious cult opposed to handshaking, was formed on the Pacific Coast, our agents inform us.

NOTES from the society column of a Russian newspaper: Mr. and Mrs. Mikuluski Gukshovski, long popular with the younger set, have disappeared. Nobody knows where they are. . . . The charming debutante, Poolooki Jabowsky, who came out last year, went in this year. Secret police caught her last night. She will summer in Solovetsky. . . . A notable costume ball was given last evening by Bukax Ruffski. Guests dressed to resemble members of firing squads. The idea was pronounced hilarious and enjoyed by all. . . .

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